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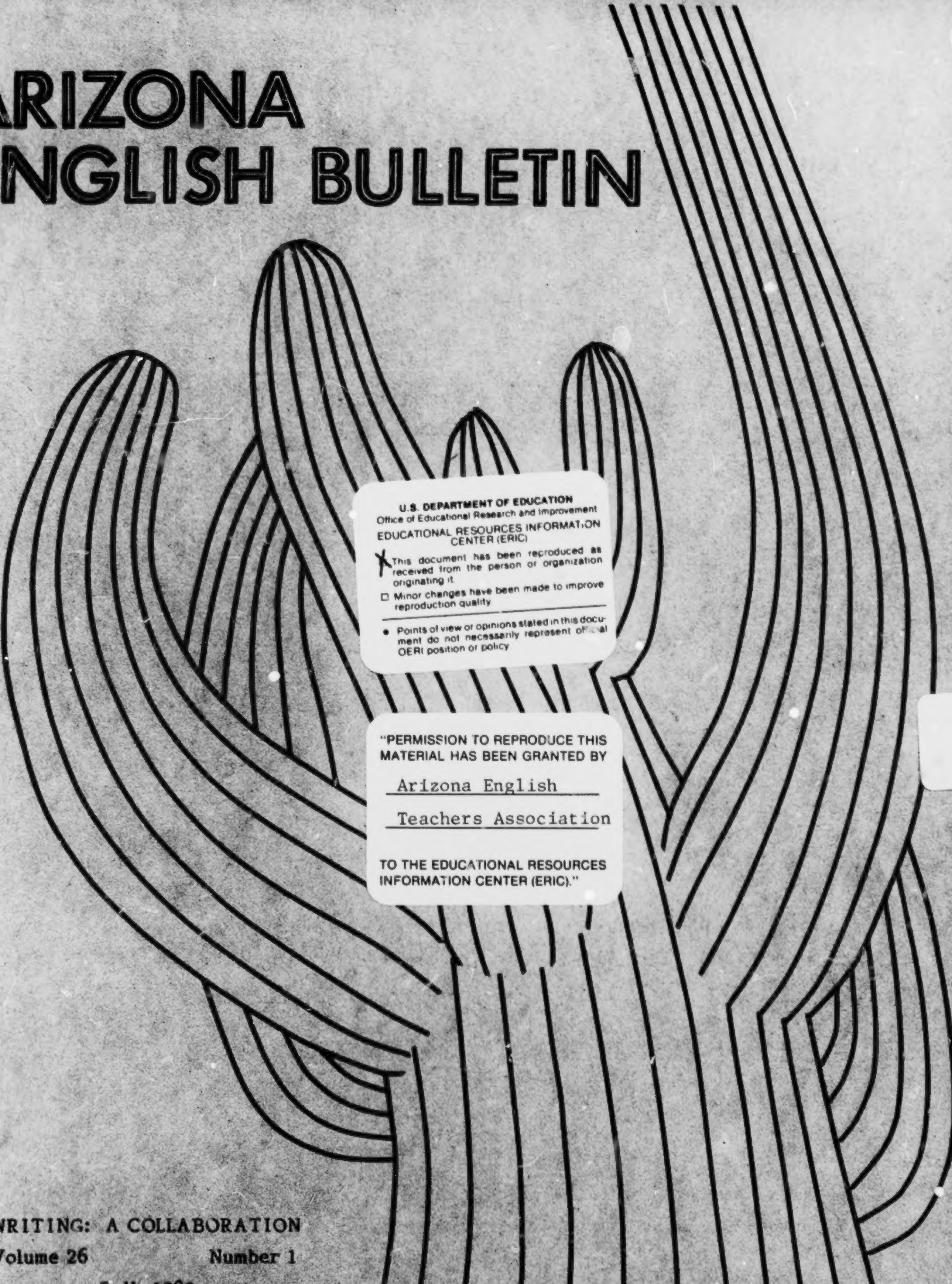
ABSTRACT

Noting that while collaborative writing is commonplace in the "real" world it is seldom practiced in classrooms, the articles in this focused journal explore the place of collaboration in the writing process and the ways in which collaboration can be fostered in an instructional setting. Following an introduction by the editor, which describes briefly five models of collaboration, the articles are divided into categories for practice and theory, dialogue between teachers, teachers working with students, students writing together, and writers and their audiences. The titles and their authors are as follows: (1) "Clues about the Writing Process" (Karl Taylor); (2) "Rhetorical Theories of Composition in the Classroom" (Laura Paxton); (3) "From a Nineteenth Century Rhetorician: A Multidimensional Plan for Invention" (Katherine H. Adams); (4) "The Need for a Grammatical Vocabulary" (Susan Hye); (5) "How Much Grammar for Remedial Students? Some Basic Criteria to Help Teachers Decide" (Ronald A. Santora); (6) "Five Easy Paragraphs" (Susan Lang-McMonagle); (7) "A Recipe for Instant Mashed Potatoes" (Lee Sall); (8) "Analogical Writing and Teacher/Student Invention" (Robert C. Weiss); (9) "Teaching the Research Paper to Thwart Plagiarism" (Bruce W. Speck); (10) "Declaring Writing Independence" (Jim Christ); (11) "Confessions of a First Quarter Tutor" (Kenneth C. Wilk); (12) "Redeeming Revision" (Lee Ann Leeson); (13) "The Personal Feature: A Peerless Peer Assignment" (Terry O. Phelps); (14) "Group Essays: The Time Is Now" (Suzanna Colby); (15) "From Darkness into Light: A Group Process Approach to the Research Paper" (Glenn Spiegelhalder); (16) "Creative Revision through Collaborative Re-vision" (Frank C. Cronin); (17) "A Case for Comprehensible Composition: Teaching the Essay in 1113" (George B. Wittmer); (18) "Semi-Collaboration: Toward a Public 'Showcase' of Student Writing" (James P. Beck); (19) "The Eleven Functions of Revision" (Carolyn Boiarsky); (20) "Communication Art, Writing Craft, and Audience Response" (Alma I. Ilacqua); (21) "Student Sensitivity to Teachers' Criteria: A Study of Basic Writers" (Deborah H. Holdstein, Linda DeCelles, and Tim Redman); and (22) "Evaluation of Composition in Shoreham-Wading River" (Mark F. Goldberg). (HTH)

ARIZONA ENGLISH BULLETIN



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WRITING: A COLLABORATION

Volume 26 Number 1

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FROM THE EDITOR

Why do we hear so little in the academic world about group writing when so much of the writing in the world outside is a collaborative effort? Many pairs of authors, in fact, have become so well known as collaborators that we think of them as a unit: Beaumont & Fletcher, Brooks & Warren, Strunk & White, Woodward & Bernstein. Collaborative writing is often practiced in business, in government, in the sciences, even in the academic world; yet in school writing collaboration of any kind--except perhaps on proofreading--is too often considered suspect, a kind of cheating on the assignment. The image of the writer we promote is that of an individual creative spirit locked in a room, solitary and undisturbed. While some writers may conform to this stereotype, believing that they must spin everything out of their own guts, many great writers of the past and present have collaborated in one way or another. Here are five models I have identified and named.

1) SAGE-SCRIBE. In this model ususally one person is responsible for the ideas and another for putting them on paper. At one end of the continuum would be the blind Milton, dictating PARADISE LOST to one of his daughters. She, we may be sure, took his words down verbatim. No room for creativity on her part. Within this category also belong Plato, who reproduced the words of Socrates, selecting and emphasizing what he perceived to be most important, and Homer, who may have been the last of a series of bards in the oral tradition or merely the scribe who finally wrote down the words of the ILIAD. Another variation of the Sage-Scribe collaboration is the celebrity-ghost writer duo, or THE STORY OF X "as told to Y." Presidents and members of congress have teams of speech-writers who collect and draft material, which is then published or delivered as the politician's own. In this version of the collaboration, the scribe has become far more than just an amanuensis. At the extreme end of the continuum from Milton is the piece written by one person, but purporting to be by someone else. Such a "sage" contributes to the writing nothing but a name on the cover. This model, familiar on college campuses, is generally known as plagiarism.

2) PLAYWRIGHT-DIRECTOR. Here two or more artists are involved. One produces an original work; another edits, revises, expands, alters, or reinterprets it to make a different work of art, usually superior to the first. One such example is the "Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam," which *in Edward Fitzgerald's translation, became a different poem. Like a dramatic performance, any translation is to some extent a reinterpretation of the original work. Changes can be dramatic, as in the case of Shakespeare, who practiced a similar long-distance collaboration with various earlier writers, often in the process of his alteration and reinterpretation leaving very little of the original author's work intact. A less drastic change is exemplified by THE ELEMENTS OF STYLE, in which E.B. White edited and expanded the original work of William Strunk. In another variation of this model, editor Maxwell Perkins is given credit for directing and shaping the work of Thomas Wolfe, choosing from its formless mass sections that could be put together to make a novel; without Perkins, so the legend goes, Wolfe could never have realized his potential. Whether this is strictly true or not, it points up the important role an editor can play in directing writing. Perkins obviously did far more than just check for sentence structure and punctuation.*

3) TRACK TEAM. This model is common among writers in business and government, and in the academic world as well. A task is divided into sections, and each writer does one portion. Like the members of a track team, each has an area of expertise in which to perform, but all are working toward a common goal--a score, or a finished piece of writing. This model would not be complete without a coach, or editor, usually one of the writers who takes the responsibility for coordinating the efforts of all the members. Thomas Jefferson must have been such a coach for the writers of the Declaration of Independence.

4) BASKETBALL TEAM. Unlike the track team, writers who follow this model function through continuous interaction. They write together, usually one serving as amanuensis, the other(s) rehearsing phrases and sentences, trying out one after the other, sometimes each writing a version for discussion, comparison, and possible combination. This model is probably the most exciting, but also the most demanding, kind of collaboration, depending as it does not only on individual skill, but on sensitivity to what others are doing and ability to interact with a group. I suspect that many husband and wife teams work this way. (My husband and I do.) John Stuart Mill tells us that ON LIBERTY, though it bears his name as author, is the work of himself and his wife, that they talked over all the ideas until they were satisfied, before committing them to paper, that the book represented the best thought of them both. Doubtless there have been many other mute inglorious Harriet Mills, who participated fully but received no credit. Still, better to be Mill's wife than Milton's daughter.

5) RENAISSANCE. This model recognizes the importance of a community atmosphere for engendering writing. It is exemplified in creative periods throughout history: the Sons of Ben during the English Renaissance; the 18th century coffee house societies; the New England Renaissance; the Irish Renaissance; the Harlem Renaissance; the Haight-Ashbury Beat Generation. Ideas and stimulation pervade the air as *writers meet, converse with each other, share ideas, read manuscripts, and provide mutual inspiration. Their social and literary intercourse results in the birth and rebirth of literature. This model is also typical of what happens during a Writing Project. As I have said before, we seem to be living in the midst of a renaissance of writing now. If we could bring its atmosphere into our classrooms, we might be surprised at what our students could do.*

I myself have done collaborative writing according to several of the models described above: with colleagues (Track Team), as editor of the BULLETIN (Playwright-Director), in poetry workshops and with the Southern Arizona Writing Project (Renaissance), and with my husband (Basketball Team). I even did a translation once of the "Second Shepherd's Play" for children. I know from experience how rewarding collaboration can be. It can teach all the aspects of writing that we normally emphasize, including some that we don't emphasize enough. For instance, pre-writing, often neglected or treated only sketchily, is essential for collaboration; without it writing cannot begin. Collaboration is also an excellent way to develop unity, coherence, and emphasis, as a group of writers struggles with consistency in tone, transitions, and choice of words. As for revision, group criticism is never so meaningful as when the paragraph or sentence under discussion is going to be published under the names of all concerned. Other benefits also accrue: students learn to become increasingly responsible for their own learning; initiative and leadership develop among the group members, along with trust and rapport; and, finally, the teacher ends up with fewer, but better, products. Glenn Spiegelhalder's article on group research papers in this issue is eloquent testimony to these advantages. Other articles in this collection exemplify different aspects of collaboration. Some are co-authored; some describe teacher-student and student-student collaboration; and some represent dialogue among teachers and between teachers and researchers.[1]

No writer is an island, complete of itself; all writers incorporate the ideas, the experience, the forms, and the language of other writers into their own. Whether they are high school students doing a research paper, or scholars debating theories in professional publications, or novelists working out new narrative strategies, or poets writing in a traditional form, all writers stride on the shoulders of giants before them.

Margaret Fleming

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[1] It seems fitting that the editing of this issue has also been a collaboration. In the past, except for the final typing and printing, it has been a one-person operation. I have done all the reviewing, correspondence, and copy-editing, as well as handling complaints of missing issues and special orders. Since last summer, however, I have had a part-time work-study student, Jan Cocoris, who has helped immensely by taking over the routine clerical tasks. During the fall semester I have been assisted in the copy-editing by Suraiya Khanum, a graduate student in English, and by Shelley Raap, who also typed the final copy. MF

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CLUES ABOUT THE WRITING PROCESS

Karl Taylor

If I'm not mistaken, Ernest Hemingway found he could compose best by standing in front of a refrigerator and writing with a pen. Another author found writing came easiest when seated rather conventionally at a desk using a typewriter. Still a third author wrote best early in the morning using a pencil, while a fourth preferred typing late in the evening. Writers--both professional and amateur--are affected by literally thousands and thousands of such peculiarities or fetishes which help or hinder them when composing. By no means do these influences affect different people in the same way: not everyone likes to write in the morning; not everyone likes to compose at a typewriter; and not everyone likes to stand in front of a refrigerator. The point is that these influences exist, and students should be aware of them. They should not be encouraged to pursue certain fetishes, but they should be aware of those which might influence their ability to do their best. With experience, the students must decide what works for them. In preparing this paper, I have drawn heavily upon my own experiences as well as those of my acquaintances and several researchers; therefore my examples may not truly be representative of what factors influence a broad range of people. I have dealt here with those affecting all four stages of the writing process (pre-writing, writing, revising, and editing), and at the end I have included some possible implications for both instruction and research.

Pre-Writing

Time for just thinking is especially important in the pre-writing stage, when the primary emphasis is being placed on planning what to write and how to express it. As a teacher, administrator, and researcher, I am frequently called upon to do all types of writing, and having a week or two to think about my subject is very helpful. However, I never set aside long periods of time for reflection like two or three hours at one sitting because I can't seem to accomplish anything with so much leisure; rather I think about my subject for short periods when I may be physically but not mentally occupied and when I'm under little or no pressure to accomplish something.

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The writing of this paper was supported by a grant from The Spencer Foundation.

For example, as I commute from my home to work, I may be able to think about my subject for 15-20 minutes, considering how to begin, how to organize it, or even what to write about. This is time that is not usually being used for anything productive. Some of my best ideas come to me during the 15-30 minutes when I am about to fall asleep, and frequently I get out of bed to make a note for the next day. Waiting for appointments with people, even for five minutes or so, can be used productively in planning what and how to write. These relatively short periods of reflection, at least for me, are much more profitable than setting aside large blocks of time. This time for thinking and planning has also helped my writing because I seldom feel pressure to produce except for that which I apply myself. Because I know what and how I'm going to write, I don't feel panic as deadlines draw near.

On rare occasions when my planning is very complete, I can go directly from thinking to composing. In other words, I take no notes or make no outlines; I begin writing immediately and seldom stop until I am finished. Because of the planning, changes are often unnecessary, even in the first draft. Several years ago, when I was asked to give a keynote address at a conference, I used this thought-to-print approach with much success. Although I had almost two months to work on my presentation, the press of other work prevented me from praparing until two days before I was to deliver the speech. However, because I had been thinking about my subject for so long and mentally outlining and organizing it, I finished the 3000-word paper in about five hours with virtually no changes. In this particular case, composing was little more than recording on paper what was already planned and organized in my head. I literally talked to myself about my subject and wrote down what I said.

Seldom, however, do I have so much time to plan as I did for the speech; as as a result I begin writing before I know exactly what I'm going to say and how I'm going to express myself. Because I was unable or unwilling to plan thoroughly, I must pay the price of having to perform several steps at the same time. While thinking about my subject and deciding on what I'm going to write, I also must be planning how I'm going to organize my work and writing, all at the same time. As Linda Flower and other researchers have pointed out, I am confronted with a large number of executive decisions which must be made about the writing task almost simultaneously. The job can become overwhelming. To reduce the number of problems to be solved at any one time, I like to discuss my subject with other people because this activity often clarifies what I'm going to say on paper. When I have a general idea of my topic but I am not yet prepared to begin work, I try to find one or more of my colleagues who are knowledgeable critics. Essentially, I explain what I'm planning to write, and they in turn react to what I say, as vague and general as it may be. If this conversation is successful, it must become a dialogue, not a monologue, with my colleague playing

Devil's Advocate in a process that could take an hour at the least, or off and on for several weeks or months. At this point in the composing process, I find that my ideas are too general, and these conversations enable me to focus more precisely on my subject. With help, I can break my topic into manageable subtopics. The major point, here, is that talking out my thoughts to someone else, who knows about the subject and can respond to my notions, makes my writing better organized and complete. For instance, my subject might change in this process from "how I write" (too general) to something like "three pre-writing activities" (more specific).

Next, I try to find several colleagues often in other disciplines who are intelligent but ignorant--who know nothing about my topic but who are intelligent and interested enough to learn. Again, I discuss my thoughts with them, and they in turn provide me with a different kind of sounding board. Since they are not acquainted with my subject, I have to be extremely careful about how I explain myself in order to be clear and to avoid assuming too much on their part. As a result, the questions and responses of this second kind of colleague provide me with important insights into where my thoughts--expressed orally--are unclear. When I am unclear, they can quickly point out that fact, but honest critics like these, who are willing and able to be objective, are hard to find. Most people don't want to take the chance of offending a writer by criticizing his work impersonally; consequently their evaluations are often subjective and generally more positive than they should be. The point, in this case, seems to be that talking about my subject to another person, unfamiliar with it, makes my writing clearer because I take less knowledge for granted. My topic by now might still be "three pre-writing activities," but my paper would be addressed, for example, to novices who might not have written much or who would not be familiar with the stages in the writing process. All these talk-write activities seem to be very similar to methods suggested by Robert Zoellner and to the findings of Carl Bereiter who implies that this conversational approach reflects how ideas are developed in dialogue situations. First one person speaks, and then the other responds to the initial speaker's remarks, often expanding or developing what was said previously. This act, in turn, usually stimulates the original speaker to consider still more notions and refine his thinking--not only by the contributions of the second speaker but also by the first speaker's attempt to express his inward ideas orally. Using this technique makes the words flow easier.

Over the years, I have discovered certain conditions seem to stimulate my best efforts--for example the time of day when composing affects the quality of the prose. When I was a student, I wrote papers primarily when I had to do so or when I took the time to write them, often, unfortunately, at the last moment and generally in the wee hours of the morning.

Later, however, when I began to write consistently at a job I discovered that, at least for me, certain periods of time were more conducive for writing than others. One summer several years ago, I had the task of writing seven chapters (about 200 typewritten pages) for a book. Without any other teaching responsibilities and little previous experience with such a large project, I decided initially and naively to devote eight hours a day, five or six days a week to the job until it was done, but I soon discovered problems with this schedule. For instance, I was definitely more productive from 8 A.M. to 12 P.M. than from 1 P.M. to 5 P.M. During the morning, I typically could write about a thousand words or four typewritten pages, but during the four-hour period in the afternoon, I could produce less than half that much. Therefore, I decided to write during the mornings and spend the afternoons doing something else.

Writing that summer became a mentally exhausting task, and I found myself seeking ways to reduce the fatigue from such intense concentration. At first, I jumped from one activity to another--writing, typing, revising, etc.--without any system, but gradually a mechanical process emerged from my experiments and helped me produce the best final product. After initially writing the ideas down in pencil, I typed them in the afternoon. During the following day, I wrote new material in the morning, typed it in the afternoon, and put it together with what I had written and typed the previous day. This procedure--writing interrupted by period of non-writing--seemed to relieve the tension caused by the intense concentration, and generally I was eager to proceed after each pause in composing. At this point, the editing process began (discussed fully later), and I produced a second typed copy with major changes in my first draft.

In addition to this process, other fetishes began to emerge. Although the decision of selecting a pen or pencil seems like a rather trivial point, several researchers--Marlene Scardamalia and Donald Graves--have shown that writers have great trouble psychologically changing or revising anything once they have put it on paper. Therefore, the use of ink, which would be hard to erase, would seem to make the task of writing even more difficult. Besides the choice of pen or pencil, other factors influenced my writing output. I found, for instance, that I could produce more if I worked in a soft overstuffed chair then if I sat behind a desk. I inserted a pad of yellow paper on a clipboard, placed it on my lap, and stretched my legs out on a footstool. And although complete silence was satisfactory, I could also turn on the radio to my favorite station, but generally I had no awareness of what music was being played. Any extended discussion on the radio or by members of my family was completely disarming, so I either had to turn off the radio, ask the family members to leave, or stop work. Many of these factors may be strictly personal fetishes of mine, but they further illustrate that little, seemingly insignificant points can detract from the greatest concentration needed to compose.

Writing

The use of the terms "pre-writing," "writing," "revising," and "editing" implies that no writing takes place during the first stage, but that observation is of course incorrect. Obviously, some kind of writing is being done in all stages, but in the second or "writing" stage, emphasis is placed primarily on the act of composing--not thinking, *organizing, correcting* or anything else. At this point, I may be doing a little thinking or minor organizing, but primarily I am simply trying to put my thoughts down on paper. Other authors have dealt extensively with this stage, so my disucssion of it will be limited to a few ideas, suggested by the research of Sondra Perl and Janet Emig, which may be helpful in keeping the words moving from mind to paper.

First, many writers, especially novices, are determined to compose a perfect first draft so they will not have to spend additional time revising and editing, or so they think. Consequently, they devote hours on the introduction to their work, perhaps spending three or four on the first few sentences and usually having little to show for the time expended. They write a sentence, cross out a few words, add several more, and finally scratch out the whole thing, returning moments later to begin again. With a new sentence, they take precious moments to look up potentially misspelled words or incorrectly punctuated clauses. Often the flow of words, which had initially been quite strong, has slowed down considerably as the writer interrupts the thought. Researchers have learned that the best writers do everything possible to avoid interrupting this spontaneous volume of words and ideas. They know that trying to write a perfect first draft is an illusion, and that attempting to get as much on paper--no matter how imperfect--is the most important first step in writing. Later, once those ideas are on paper, the writer can go back to revise and edit what he has done, not during the process of putting ideas on paper.

Second, if the fatigue of writing, the annoyance of interruptions, or something else destroyed my concentration while working on that book several summers ago, I either rested or I tried several techniques to stimulate the thinking/writing process again. Often, when I couldn't seem to get started, I reread what I had previously written, an act which seemed to put me back into the flow of ideas. Sometimes simply retyping an edited page or two helped stimulate my thought, and occasionally writing on any subject without stop was helpful, as Peter Elbow has mentioned. If none of these techniques was productive, I soon discovered that spending much more time was usually counter productive. I became frustrated and angry, often taking out my feelings on my typewriter, friends, and family. Once I recognized the futility of the situation, I put my work aside and returned to it later when the conditions were more conducive than at that particular moment.

Revising

After a product is finished--either a 500-word theme or a 10,000-word chapter for a book--some kind of revision is generally needed. Sondra Perl and Janet Emig, however, found that most students don't automatically revise school-assigned work, but that they were more inclined to polish the writing they did for their own satisfaction. In contrast, I have found few students who really understand the meaning of revision, who can or will take a perfectly correct piece of writing and try to improve it. Their notion of revision is correcting mechanical and grammatical errors; it is not taking a relatively correct piece of writing and improving on it. At least one reason for this problem is that, in my case, no one ever showed me how to revise or explained that correct writing in not necessarily good writing. I had to learn from experience. In addition, writers are so close to what they are doing that they, at least initially, are not very good judges of the quality of their work. When I have just written something, I often feel that it could not possibly be improved, and to overcome my biases, I must develop some kind of distance between myself and the written product.

Over the years I have learned several methods for overcoming this subjective view of my own writing. First, it is always valuable to finish a piece of work and set it aside for at least a day before trying to revise, but even longer periods can be beneficial. Following this procedure, I am able to look at my work with a fresh view and discover many problems that I failed to detect earlier. Second, giving the piece to someone else (either familiar or unfamiliar with the subject) can also be helpful. Again, he/she can bring fresh insight to the task because he did not write the material, and he must make sense out of what someone else has written. Third, somewhere in the revision process, I read the material out loud to myself to see how it sounds, an effective technique for analyzing the transition between sentences and between paragraphs. Oral reading also picks up wordy or awkward phrasing which silent reading will seldom if ever detect. Fourth, I find it extremely valuable to type a copy and to do my revising on that version because somehow typing enables me to see (discussed later under "editing") what I cannot often see in a handwritten copy. Fifthly, I have found that it is helpful to prepare a list of specific tasks which I want to perform while revising; in other words, instead of just randomly looking at what I have written, I like to create a kind of check list of frequent problems appearing in my work and often needing attention. For example, I write paragraphs which are too short or too long, and so when I type my work, I can see how developed they are. Judgements about paragraph length are difficult to make in handwritten versions because the size of handwriting differs greatly between individuals and between various times when the same person is writing. Next, I check the first word in each sentence to determine whether or not my sentence structure is varied. If all begin with the same word, I have a fairly good idea that the structure is also monotonous. When I used to be unsure about my grammar, I mentally looked for the subject and verb of each sentence to avoid fragments, note comma faults and overcome subject/verb disagreements. And since I have a tendency to overuse certain words like "that," "which," and others, I have accumulated a list which I systematically check for repetition. The point is that developing a list of problems is a good way of making this process more systematic and precise.

Editing

Editing, at least for me, is an act designed to determine whether what I have written is correct or not--no commas are missing, no words are used incorrectly (I've said what I mean), no capital letters have been forgotten, and the like. Thus, editing is proofreading. Although we admonish students to edit what they have written, I suspect we should take more time to discuss and study the editing process because most don't seem to do a very careful job. Part of their carelessness, I suspect, comes from failing to develop a systematic procedure for screening potential errors, and an important ingredient is understanding the difference between the surface and deep structures of written language.

A number of years ago linguists noted that language has two structures--what we can see, called the surface, and what is meant by the words we see, called the deep structure. For example, the surface of the expression "Go jump in the lake" consists of these five words on the page, while the deep structure or meaning suggests that someone is annoying us and we wish that they would leave our presence. When we edit or proofread what we have written, we must be aware of both structures because errors can be present in either or both, and because each structure requires a different kind of editing. For example, note the following:

Go jump in the lak.

With this surface error, the "e" in "lake" has been overlooked, and discovering this problem will be relatively easy because "lak" looks so different from "lake." However, when incorrect items--words, punctuation, etc.--resemble the correct versions closely, detecting errors is more difficult, as is the case with the next example: "receive" or "recieve." Moreover, when students are not familiar with the words they are using, when they don't use them very often in writing, the chances of their failing to proofread accurately are relatively great. When they don't see a word very often, any slight error is difficult to decipher, while errors in common words are relatively easy to detect because they are used and seen frequently.

A new problem arises with the next illustrations:

Go jump in the luck. Go jump in luck the.

In these cases, no error exists in the surface structure--every word is spelled correctly and the incorrect use or placement of "luck" would never be detected without reference to the deep structures. In other words, to find these errors one would have to do more than just look at the individual words. An author would have to determine whether all of the words in the surface not only made sense but also expressed what the author wanted to say. Therefore, when I edit, I must proofread at least several times, each in a different way, because concentration on just the surface structure will prevent me from detecting errors in the deep structure and focus on just the deep structure will make error detection on the surface difficult. Probably every writer has spent some time editing his work and concluded that it is correct; later, however, when he reviews his work, he discovers errors he never saw previously--because he was trying to edit both structures at the same time or because he slipped from concentrating on one to the other, even momentarily. Mina Shaughnessy has noted that Basic Writers have enormous problems in editing because they do not seem to have grasped the essential difference between the two structures. Simply understanding the existence of surface and deep elements is not enough, however, because most people find editing for meaning is much easier than editing for surface errors. Even when I know the two structures exist and when I want to concentrate on the surface, I still end up, even for a few moments in the process, reading for meaning, reading the deep structures. It is difficult and unnatural trying to look at words and punctuation without responding not to their surface features but to their meaning. Therefore, I have developed several techniques for dealing with these problems in editing.

One of the most effective first steps in learning how to edit is to begin with a clean typewritten or handwritten copy virtually free of cross-overs, corrections, and changes. I have found that it is extremely difficult to edit a messy page which is hard to read and which often contains insuffient room for changes and additions. For that reason, I strongly encourage my students to type their papers using wide margins and double-spacing. Then with this clean copy, changes and additions can be made without creating a copy which can't be read at all. I personally prefer a typed version because it is easier to read. Handwriting seems to be harder to proofread because it is less precise than type and because the handwritten letters can vary in size so greatly. As a result, it is difficult to see whether a sentence or paragraph is too long or too short, whether an "e" is an "a" or an "o". In short, typewritten copies are likely to be less confusing and easier to revise and edit than handwritten ones.

Next, I try to avoid editing in a haphazard fashion. After spending a great deal of time writing, my tendency is to rush the proofreading because I'm simply tired and don't want to spend more time at the task. This lack of patience can be costly, and to avoid this tendency, I have devised a process which I use when editing. I do not just read my work over and over; instead, each time I try to accomplish a single purpose, checking for just one problem, not a large number at the same time. First, I decide to check the deep structure to make certain that I have said what I meant, often beginning with silent reading. When I'm finished, I repeat the procedure, but this time I read aloud, looking for repetition, wordiness, and awkwardness. Second, I decide to check the surface structure to make certain that I made no errors--in spelling, punctuation, grammar, mechanics, and typing. I look at each word (not read each one), try to isolate it from those around it, and attempt to avoid making sense out of the deeper structures. If I slip back to reading for meaning, a tendency which everyone must guard against, I can draw upon two techniques. First, I cut a square box in a 3-by-5 card approximately two inches long and one-half inch high. I can then run this card along each line of typed copy, blotting out everything except what I can see in the box. This activity seems to help isolate single words from this context and to make errors easier to detect. However, if I have not previously checked for deep structure errors, I would not be able to detect the incorrect choice of words like "to" for "too" using this card method. Second, as I grew more experienced, I found that I could temporarily blot out reading for meaning by reviewing my work backwards. This activity forces me to look at each word individually because I can't make sense out of words in reverse order.

Finally, after I am satisfied that I have found any errors in the surface and deep structures, I try to set the material aside for as long as possible so that I can gain greater distance from it. Sometimes, I only have a few minutes or hours, but on other occasions I can let the material rest for several days. The result of this distance is I can go through the same process of editing both structures again and discover errors that I did not find the first time. If I am pressed for time between the writing and editing steps, I sometimes ask other people to proofread my work, and this step seems to add distance because they have no familiarity with my writing. As I have gained more and more experience with composing, however, I have found that I now can combine many of these editing steps so less time is expended. Nevertheless, in order to help my students improve their skills, I encourage them to perform all the steps in the process. Later, when their proofreading skills have improved, they can delete or combine various activities.

Summary

So far in this paper, I have discussed some factors which influence me and at least a few others when proceeding through the four stages of the writing process. I dealt with the amount of time needed for thinking, the need for discussing my subject orally, ways for reducing writing fatigue, techniques for increasing the flow of words, and different methods for revising and editing my work. Although these factors, conditions, or fetishes do not affect every writer in the same way, obviously every writer has those things which affect him as he works. He must discover what works for him. Probably writing can be done any time, any place, and under almost any conditions, but some people seem to produce better when they can select the time, place, and conditions best for them. The purposes of this paper were to note that writing can be influenced by various conditions and to encourage teachers to make students aware of that fact.

Implications for Teaching

As Emig has said, I believe few students are ever taught very much about the writing process; rather they are more likely to receive some instruction in grammar, mechanics and perhaps organization. In short, they learn about the end (the product) but little about the means (the process). According to my observations as well as those of Emig, Perl, and others, many students are being asked to write in class under conditions which do not seem to be conducive to their best work. If students are not allowed enough time to think, if they do not have the opportunity to discuss their paper with others, if they are not allowed to select the time of day and conditions for pre-writing and writing, if they are not given enough time to develop a distance in order to revise and edit, I wonder if we are setting up conditions which foster poor rather than good writing. We want students to write their best and we want to be fair to them, but we may be inadvertently discouraging what, in fact, we really want to encourage. For that reason, teachers should consider the following possible implications for their instruction:

1. Teachers should discuss with students how many executive decisions must be made when writing and how certain steps can reduce the number which students must make at any one time.
2. Consideration needs to be given to how students can talk out their subjects before beginning to write. For example, in my own classes, I spend at least one day or two on each assignment, requiring every student to explain orally to the class what he/she is going to write about. This act helps the student clarify his subject to himself as well as supplies other members of the class with ideas for writing.
3. Teachers should encourage students to experiment with the time of day when they do their work and with the actual process of writing--the place, the materials, the background, and the like. I

suspect that many students are not aware of what conditions help or deter their work.

4. Exercises should be developed to encourage students to write without stopping and editing too soon. Their purpose would be to show students the importance of initially getting words on paper first and worrying about editing much later.

5. Attention needs to be placed on the revision stage because too many students have no awareness of the need or techniques for revising. Perhaps students could be given perfectly correct writing and asked to revise it following certain suggestions or guidelines. To develop a sense of distance, students might be asked to turn in a paper, let's say on Monday, and then on Wednesday the teacher might return the papers for revising. This act might demonstrate how time can be used to develop distance between the writer and the product. For the same reason, students might learn to work as pairs or small groups, reading and revising their papers together.

6. Teachers need to help students develop their own checklists for revising by observing their writing and pointing out common recurring problems.

7. Some time needs to be spent exploring the difference between the surface and deep structures as well as various techniques for editing them. Perhaps students should be supplied with editing exercises--written materials on which they are to practice their editing skills.

Implications for Research

If a paper like this one is to have any value, it must be followed by research to examine thoroughly some of those conditions which affect how a small number of people write. What affects me as a writer may not affect you. What I feel is important may not be important to you. And as several researchers have suggested to me, writing this paper or examining these problems may not be very productive because writing processes may be unique. They may not affect many or a significant number of other people. However, solid research might show that this statement is not true or that at least some factors do influence most people. The following questions seem to offer promise:

1. Emig, Perl, and Flower are the principal investigators who have been studying the composing process and using some form of the case study method. In their work, their subjects have been students and a

few experts, but the latter have generally been graduate students or other teachers. Examining the processes used by genuine experts who make their living as writers of primarily expository prose might be especially enlightening. Surely these skills would be more highly developed than those of subjects in earlier research.

2. Various types of writing may stimulate or require different processes. For example, researchers have been examining how people write on the spot in a matter of a few minutes or hours, a kind of in-class writing typical of the academic setting. However, how does that process differ from the one used more commonly in the non-academic world which might be described as out-of-class writing? In this instance, the writer has days or even weeks to plan and revise his work.

3. In the academic world, to what extent are students required to write in class under rather rigid or controlled conditions?

4. What are some methods by which we can teach students to talk out their papers before they write?

5. Can students improve their writing by changing the time when they compose?

6. Assuming that students need to learn how to take correct writing and improve it, can such exercises be developed and would that improvement transfer to the students' own writing?

7. Can some techniques or procedures be developed for classroom teachers so they can help students develop distance between themselves and what they have written?

8. Can exercises be developed for improving students' editing skills and will any improvement transfer to their own writing?

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THE GAP BETWEEN THEORY AND PRACTICE

Donald Stewart, who recently became chair of the Conference on College Composition and Communication, is concerned about the tremendous gap between the thinking of leading composition theorists and that of classroom teachers.

"Too many of our teachers," says Stewart, "have not been liberated from late 19th century ideas which simply do not square with what we know today about good writing instruction."

"Writing teachers," he continues," often leap straight into questions of style and mechanics. It's part of what they've inherited. They emphasize superficial, mechanical correctness instead of the substance of what students write. This approach forces students into trying to use language that itsn't their real language, and into writing assignments that have no real bearing on what they do in their lives."

"If, on the other hand, you teach students how to discover and then work with subjects that interest them, get them to put their thoughts down on paper, and react first, to what they say," Stewart observes, "a wonderful thing happens. They start to get interested in what's going on in class. Students have said to me, 'You mean I have to say something real in this class?' And I say, 'Yes! I'm your editor; you're trying to interest your classmates and me in your subject. You're trying to convince us it's important.' Mechanics can be worked on later."

Stewart's research on the fundamental question, "Why don't students write better than they do?" has led him to conclude that nearly one hundred years ago, the teaching of rhetoric in American got off on the wrong track, with unhappy results for that vast majority of students who don't plan on scholarly careers, but who need to express themselves competently in writing throughout their lives.

"We talk about teaching, serving the public, and scholarship as our duties as educators, but the most revered names in the profession of English have been literary scholars only," Stewart comments. The profession needed better models in its infancy, and it overlooked the best one it had: Fred Newton Scott of the University of Michigan. Scott loved working with college freshmen on their writing. He insisted that a writing teacher simply has to get next to each student and know each one individually. He said that when you ask freshmen to write literary criticism, what you get is 'the fluff and ravellings of the adolescent mind,' not the student's independent thought, nor the student's real capability with the language."

"The harsh question," Stewart says, "is where did the public get its narrow concpetion of writing? Did we teachers give it to them? If so, how long will it be before we can change that conception and liberate ourselves and our students from unreal and inhibiting perceptions of a very basic human activity?"

RHETORICAL THEORIES OF COMPOSITION IN THE CLASSROOM

Laura Paxton

As composition teachers, we have probably all felt uneasy when confronted with the mechanically perfect paper that said nothing. The other extreme we have probably encountered is the paper that was original and thought-provoking but could barely be deciphered because of atrocious mechanics. What can we do to achieve a balance? We do not want to continue the creative laxness of the '60's; neither do we want to return to traditional grammar. Neither right-brain nor left-brain approaches are the total answer. We do not want student essays to exude shocking honesty just for the sake of creativity; neither can we condone formula-perfect essays that are mindless. Composition must both create and reflect thinking. It must show originality as well as logical evaluation. In essence, composition is a balancing act both for the teacher and for the student, and this position cannot be achieved without adequate knowledge of the various theories of composition. The word "composition" means to put together parts or elements to form a whole. Thus, writing is neither creating, ordering, nor style, but a delicate relationship among all three elements.

Rhetoricians through the years have offered numerous plans by which a writer or a teacher could achieve effective composition. The tenets of classical rhetoric were best summarized by Corbett in 1971 (Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student). He emphasized Aristotle's five arts of persuasion: invention, the discovery of valid arguments to support a proposition; arrangement, the ordering of these arguments; style, the figures of speech or tropes; memory, the memorization of the speech; and delivery of the oratory.[1] While composition teachers have been interested only in the first three arts, they have strongly favored invention.[2] Since the traditional classifications of definition, comparison, and relationship were based on ways of thinking, students were taught to view all propositions from these mental locales.[3] All description, narration, exposition, and argumentation were to make use of the classical *topoi*, or topics.[4] Thus the writer was provided with information which could next be arranged in a specific way. Such a checklist used recall of consciously known information. It was really discovery, not invention *per se*.

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In 1867 the psychologist Alexander Bain (English Composition and Rhetoric) used the classifications of the topoi to establish the modes of discourse which he organized according to the three faculties of the mind: the purpose of description, narration, and exposition was to inform and thus appeal to man's understanding; argument was to persuade and thus appeal to the will; poetry was to please and so appeal to his feelings.[5] Such an emphasis on form ultimately led to canned or formulaic writing in the classwork.

Other rhetoricians have reclassified these modes or forms of discourse. Leonard's scheme is merely a reordering of them from the most concrete to the most abstract (1914).[6] Moffett's Spectrum of Discourse is an arrangement according to "increasing distance in time and space between the speaker and his subject" (Teaching the Universe of Discourse, 1968).[7] Each plan has served its purpose. Yet, while the modes do represent mental processes, principles of thought, they are also prescriptive, focusing on the completed work rather than on the actual process of composing. Each one is extrinsic to writing rather than intrinsic.

D'Angelo believes that "these various methods of development can be found in any kind of writing" and that they invariably overlap.[8] He also thinks that, while the beginning composition teacher should be familiar with the modes, that the entire writing process should be stressed.[9] He has realized the importance of both process and mode as tools of composition. His system is a mixture of the classical topoi plus some nonlogical topics which employ free association, symbolizing, and imagining.[10] Here, at least, is the beginning of a workable system. However, D'Angelo neglects to include a system of checks whereby the validity of the writer's ideas may be tested. The process of filling in one of the structures appears to take precedence.

Kenneth Burke's approach (Grammar of Motives, 1945 and Rhetoric of Motives, 1950), the use of the Pentad, is somewhat more psychological in nature than the classical topoi methods but it too relies on conscious recall (like classical invention) rather than on true invention. His dramatistic method for analyzing human motives requires that a writer determine what is happening (act), when and where it is happening (scene), who is involved (agent), how the human drama is taking place (agency), and why it is occurring (purpose).[11] This is similar to the journalist's "who, what, when, where, how, why" checklist. Burke's method, however, allows the writer to identify with any one or a combination of these elements in order to probe their interaction and to develop new insights.

In 1965 D. Gordon Rohman made a significant contribution to creative thought and effective teaching methods. His technique of imposing pattern upon experience really is invention, not mere recall.[12] His use of heuristics, specific plans for analyzing and searching through a series of steps in an effort to stimulate new thought, is termed pre-writing. While invention's aim is to persuade, pre-writing's aim is self-actualization.[13] It employs the writer's intuitions and uses such exploratory techniques as free association and free writing; it particularly stresses the use of the journal, meditation, and analogy as tools by which the writer can discover his beliefs, internalize the data, and see them in a different perspective.[14] While the use of such heuristics has indeed personalized the writer's experiences, this "seed-idea" approach is essentially right-brain activity that is never verified by left-brain logic. In pre-writing, the writer creates his own reality.

Then a radically new idea appeared on the scene. In 1967 Kenneth Pike advanced his theory of composition that is based on physics. Tagmemics was formally presented in 1970 by Pike, Becker, and Young (Rhetoric: Discovery and Change). Using cognitive psychology and problem-solving to allay psychological defenses and thus change writing behavior, they focused on certain ordering principles that are universal invariants that underlie all human experience.[15] Their linguistic approach which stresses identification to facilitate communication has been successfully used by missionaries in foreign countries.[16] In an effort to aid the writer in retrieving and analyzing relevant data and in discovering relationships, they have established a nine-cell matrix based on the scientific perspectives of the particle, the wave, and the field--three characteristics that must be known if a topic is to be completely understood. First the writer views his subject in terms of its smallest units, as a collection of separate parts. Next, he notes the relationships among those parts. Finally, he sees it as part of a larger system which is related to other things.[17] Like the pre-writing approach, tagmemics satisfies the writer's need to know; it leads him to be certain of what he knows. While this heuristic appears to be innovative and complete in its examination of a topic, it is little used. It also fails to validate assumptions and relies on self-communication rather than on actual writing.

All of these heuristics have been valuable aids in the composing process, each suggesting strategies whereby the writer can discover or invent subject matter for discourse. They have stimulated the memory, coaxed the imagination, and encouraged the intuition. All are teachable procedures which raise the skills of writing from being a knack. There are numerous other problem-solving strategies for writing which also work: Flower's brain-storming trees,[18] Larson's systematic questioning,[19] Cowan's looping and cubing[20] etc., are all effective techniques of invention. Peter Elbow goes so far as to advocate the benefits of teaching composition as an organic process.[21] And Macrorie even advocates a process which needs no teacher.[22] While all of these techniques have their merits, it must be remembered that they activate only one side of the brain. They do not juggle invention, arrangement, and style and therefore fail to achieve a holistic heuristic. None of them achieve a balance between the idea and the vehicle that carries it. Like the combined forces of a driver and a car, neither one can be static. Even though it is the driver that begins the motion (invention), he is bound by it (arrangement and style). We cannot logically separate the writer from the form of his message since both must work together in an intricate balancing act.

Probably the most complete systematic inquiry to date has been offered by James Kinneavy (A Theory of Discourse, 1971) who is as "concerned with the aims of discourse as he is with the modes of discourse."[23] He has based his system of classification on both the Aristotelian triad and the communications theory of writer, audience, and subject interaction.[24] The writer/speaker is referred to as the encoder whose aim is to express his/her own thoughts. When the writer/speaker aims a message at an audience or decoder, the purpose is either expository or persuasive. When the aim is to focus on the subject, the message is usually referential (scientific or objective discourse). Then, when the focus is on the text, the writer's aim is to produce a literary message intended to give pleasure to the reader.[25] According to Kinneavy, all language signals carry the message from the encoder to the decoder through a reality in which the message occurs. This is a more complex model than McCrimmon's scheme whereby the writer sends a message through the subject to the reader, all of which are bound by the restraints of the situation.[26] Also, Kinneavy's model takes into account a teachable gradation from the subjective to the objective, from the less difficult to the more difficult, from the present to the past, and from the immediate to the more remote.[27] This orderly sequence begins with the expressive writings of the individual (journals, diaries) and of social groups (declarations, petitions, contracts), moves to referential writing which is divided into three groups: exploratory writing which asks questions (seminars, diagnosis, and reports of similar situations in which tentative solutions to problems are proposed), informative writing which answers questions (news articles, summaries, textbooks), and scientific articles which attempt to prove or test a point either inductively or deductively. Literary works include short stories, lyrics, limericks, movies, and jokes. Finally, persuasive discourse includes the writings of advertisers, lawyers, ministers, and editorializers.[28] Whereas Moffett believes that the writer's choices are determined by his sensitivity to the relationship of the three elements of the triad, Kinneavy asserts that such choices are rather determined by the author's purpose or aim.[29] Here, again, is a lack of balance in theories; each one appears to ignore the two-way flow between the writer and his work--the force of the driver upon the direction of the vehicle and the force of the moving vehicle upon the driver.

For this reason alone no one single theory is adequate to a teacher's needs. There are only superior and inferior schemes, mostly arrangements.[30] Unfortunately, most of them include both oral and written communications (too large and too diverse realms), ignore style (an essential element of writing), neglect idea validation through logic, and lose sight of the interactive nature, the two-way flow, between the creator and the creation.

Wayne Booth probably summarized this idea best in his article on the rhetorical stance which he defines as the writer's ability to maintain "a proper balance among the three elements that are at work in a communicative effort: the available arguments about the subject itself, the interests and peculiarities of the audience, and the voice, the implied character, of the speaker."[31] We cannot afford to rely on only one part of this network, not on intrinsic or extrinsic arguments, not on invention or discovery, not on process or mode, but on a combination of all of these. We cannot afford to teach only part of a skill.

So when we get those mechanically perfect papers that are meaningless or those almost unreadable papers that really have something to say, let's not sigh and give up there. This stage is only a beginning for the teacher who has more to teach; it's only one phase of three: invention, arrangement, and style. The student who has already found a message needs to progress to methods of arrangement and style; the student who already knows these skills but has nothing to say needs to work on discovery and invention. The teacher who concentrates on only one of these three facets automatically condemns the out-of-sync learner.

The pendulum has swung from dull traditional-grammar-oriented classrooms to those which have become mere playpens. Macrorie's Third Way (using a student-centered classroom to produce spontaneous writing) has merely placed the teacher in the untenable role of a dream-killer if he dares to grade this explosively honest writing or in the position of a therapist.[32] Now it is time to find a balance, to teach a holistic method that allows us to effectively strike a realistic stance. This means creating and discovering ideas; teaching patterns that can be modified or overlapped to meet the needs of the writer, the audience, and the material; and including figures of speech, plus effective word choice, rhetoric and logic. And if it takes work for a teacher to be adequate in all these phases, it would be worth it. Maybe then Johnny could not only read, but he could think too.

Notes

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[4] Corbett, pp. 110-127.

[5] Frank J. D'Angelo, "Modes of Discourse," Teaching Composition: Ten Bibliographic Essays, ed. Gary Tate (Ft. Worth, Texas: Texas Christian University Press, 1976), pp. 115-116.

[6] D'Angelo, "Modes of Discourse," pp. 119-120.

[7] D'Angelo, "Modes of Discourse," pp. 126-128.

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[10] Charles Yarnoff, "Contemporary Theories of Invention in the Rhetorical Tradition," College English, 41(5),(January 1980), p. 555.

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[12] Robert De Beaugrande, "The Process of Invention: Association and Recombination," College Composition and Communication, 30,(October 1979), p. 260.

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[24] D'Angelo, "Modes of Discourse," pp. 129-130.

[25] D'Angelo, "Modes of Discourse," p. 129.

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[27] Kinneavy, p. 61.

[28] Kinneavy, p. 61.

[29] Kinneavy, p. 61.

[30] Leonard A. Podis, "Teaching Arrangement: Defining a More Practical Approach," College Composition and Communication, 31, (May 1980), p. 197.

[31] Wayne C. Booth, "The Rhetorical Stance," College Composition and Communication, 14, (October 1963), p. 141.

[32] James B. Vopat, "Uptaught Rethought - Coming Back From the 'Knockout'," College English, 40(1), (September 1978), p. 42.

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CALLS FOR PAPERS

The SUMMER 1984 issue of *THE WRITING INSTRUCTOR* will be devoted in part to the topic of *Writing Instruction Through the Ages: Continuity and Change*. We are now seeking essays which discuss how knowledge of our profession's history can help us improve our profession and our teaching today. Papers covering teaching methods once used should include information on how and why, especially given more recent changes in rhetorical theory and students' needs, such teaching methods can be made appropriate and useful for modern composition students.

Deadline for submission is December 15, 1983. Address correspondence and manuscripts to the Attention of Grant Boswell and Ed Erdmann, Summer 1984 Issue Editors, at the above address.

The FALL 1984 issue of *THE WRITING INSTRUCTOR* will be devoted in part to the topic of Tailoring Instructional Fashion to Personal Tastes.

Why do some writing teachers don the blue-jeans and polo shirts of the casual and messy writing workshop, while others prefer the three-piece, pin-striped conservatism of the classic and dependable modes? And what of those instructors whose mixed instructional wardrobe recalls the eclectic taste and trend-setting courage of the thrift shop devotee?

For the FALL 1984 issue, *THE WRITING INSTRUCTOR* solicits essays exploring how writing teachers select their "instructional wardrobes," effectively matching personality with a myriad of pedagogical methods: tailoring instructional fashion in our profession to personal tastes.

Deadline for submission is March 15, 1984. Address correspondence and manuscripts to the Attention of Leigh Melton and Terry Beers, Fall 1984 Issue Editors, at the above address.

GUIDELINES FOR AUTHORS: Articles should be no more than fifteen doublespaced typed pages. Use internal documentation of sources whenever practical. Send two copies of manuscripts and include SASE. Also include pertinent biographical information. The Editorial Board reserves the right to edit articles to conform with the Guidelines for Non-Sexist Language in NCTE Publications. Authors are encouraged to append to their articles classroom-tested exercises, handouts, and classroom tools which can be reproduced by photocopying a page from *TWI*.

The Writing Instructor

c/o The Freshman Writing Program
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FROM A NINETEENTH CENTURY RHETORICIAN:
A MULTIDIMENSIONAL PLAN FOR INVENTION

Katherine H. Adams

In a recent article in Visible Language, Richard Young maintains that modern rhetoric is a reaction to a nineteenth century concentration on forms of discourse and disavowal of the feasibility of teaching invention: "all the work of origination must be left to the writer himself" (John Genung, The Practical Elements of Rhetoric, 1892).[1] Young next isolates two separate thrusts of the reaction: the "new romanticism" of Bruner, James Miller, and William Coles, who approach composing as mysterious growth that should be fostered by a teacher/encourager; and the "new classicism" of Weaver, Christensen, and Pike, who teach rational heuristics applicable in various writing situations. Although Young recognizes that these two conceptions have been in conflict in other centuries, he suggests the possibility of a "both-and" attitude instead of "either-or":

> We can respond to this conflict by partisan denial of one of the truths, as some have done, though the price of partisanship strikes me as excessively high. Or we can cultivate a Keatsian negative capability and live with the conflict, exploiting one or the other of the conceptions as it suits our needs as teachers. (p. 348)

As Young states, Genung did help "establish the paradigm that has dominated the teaching of rhetoric in the United States for nearly a century" (p. 341), but many nineteenth century rhetoricians, like Day, Haven, and Hart, were vitally concerned with fostering invention and were influenced by both possibilities for teaching. One, A. D. Hepburn, even offers a practical solution to the "either-or" conflict. His three-pronged invention technique, derived from a career of teaching writing at the University of North Carolina, Miami of Ohio, and Davidson, features a thorough "new classicist" investigation as well as "new romanticist" free writing. His advice has proven helpful in my freshman and advanced composition classes where I have been torn between the two alternatives, between

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Elbow and Pike.

In Hepburn's Manual of English Rhetoric (1875), a popular high school and college text, the first chapters concern "processes conversant about the matter of a discourse": subject, invention, and disposition.[2] He first emphasizes invention by characterizing work where it is lacking: what Macrorie would call "Engfish" and Emig the Fifty-Star five-paragraph theme. Writing in the schools, he says, is too often "a collection of second-hand sentiments and empty commonplaces strung together in an artificial, frigid matter, which can neither interest nor affect others." At the root of the problem lies the student's lack of commitment to a subject and to an audience:

> Our feelings exert a powerful influence upon our intellectual abilities. A deep moral interest in the subject fixes the attention on it, calls up from the memory related thoughts, and directs them to the main end for which the discourse is made; while the consciousness of insincerity distracts the mind and prevents the writer from yielding himself entirely to his subject. His meditation will be languid and painful; and the coolness, artificial structure, and want of real unity of the discourse will betray his untruthfulness. (p. 29)

Hepburn suggests that topics should not be assigned since successful papers stem from "fullness of knowledge and thoroughness of conviction" (p. 29). Students should begin with a subject of interest generated from other classes, jobs, experience, or reading, and narrow to a specific theme or thesis only after prolonged reflection. And from the beginning, they must be aware of "the character and condition of those to whom the discourse is addressed" (p. 30). To follow this advice, I give my students suggestions of theme types, such as book, movie, restaurant, or vacation reviews, editorials or interviews and allow them to choose an organization and audience.

With a situation for writing posited, Hepburn's students next turn to the "new classicist" approach to probe the possibilities of the subject. He suggests Aristotle's topoi which make "prominent the points to be noticed, and [mark] a path in which their thoughts can proceed." With respect to an event, for example, questions on time, place, parties engaged, causes, effects and attendant circumstances might bring fuller knowledge and a clearer focus.

For this first exploration, I chose Frank D'Angelo's clear and compact version of the topoi from Process and Thought in Composition. Under description, for example, are these questions: "What are its constituent parts?, What are its features or physical characteristics?, How is it organized in space?"; for process is found: "How did it happen?, How does it work?, What are its stages or phases?, How do you make it or do it?"[3]

Starting with a general subject, my students are required to jot down answers to any questions that seem applicable and circle the most interesting ones to consider further. Irritated over Knoxville's now dilapidated World's Fair site, one student was spurred by causal analysis to examine the city's reasons for ignoring our "big valley"; interested in our governor's new master teacher program, another realized she needed to be able to describe it more thoroughly--and thus turned to background reading. A reviewer considering Blade Runner turned through comparison questions to an interest in the original fiction source, Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep? by Phillip K. Dick.

For Hepburn the topoi's broad perspectives provide only the first step of invention; after obtaining a clearer emphasis, students turn to a "new romanticist" approach, to bring their subjects to themselves. Trained as a Presbyterian minister, Hepburn may have known the traditional Christian composition of place, internal colloquy, and resolution or Augustine's recollection and introversion, but he outlines a simpler "meditation": a careful pondering of the subject. Like religious meditators, though, students should go from the surface (and a broad suggestion from the topoi) to more detail and to a developed personal opinion:

> The first suggestions are generally obscure, superficial, and commonplace. It requires perseverance to extort from the mind its treasures. By prolonged brooding over the subject our interest in it increases, and the suggestive faculty and the judgment act more vigorously. New relations are detected, new combinations are formed. . . (p. 37)

During this procedure, Hepburn adds, students must try to keep thinking and writing, restraining their desire to criticize:

> . . . let him yield himself to the subject and to the impressions that it makes upon him, and abandon himself boldly to the current of his thoughts. They will not arise in the shape or order in which they will appear in the finished composition. Many of them will be incorrect, inappropriate, defective. But he should not chill the ardor of thought by pausing to separate the true from the false. . . (p. 38)

Here Hepburn's advice coincides with Rohman's well-known characterization of meditation's role in pre-writing: "Keep composing until you reach the point that your understanding of your 'subject' is experienced within, until, in other words, the 'event' of your subject happening to you becomes an 'experience' happening within you."[4] Rohman, and David Stewart in The Authentic Voice, suggest starting the process in a specific "place" with associations for the writer; perhaps for Hepburn "place" becomes an emphasis derived from the topoi. On doing intensive writing, Hepburn is also now echoed by Elbow, Murray and others who recognize that writers should first create many words, many digressions, while keeping their editor-selves at bay.

With the reinforcement of journal writing and brainstorming activities done in class, my students work at meditation by following Peter Elbow's suggestion to keep the pencil going for three or four forty-five minute sessions, sharpening the focus each time.[5] Thus a student who had examined causal questions and began writing on the Alabama game's effect of the downtown area now collected his feelings on the almost-violent celebration and the lines of police. A classmate who had decided to describe the possibilities of a cheap Memphis vacation began jotting down her memories of key attractions along with digressions on her own trip.

After these two steps of pre-writing, Hepburn encourages students to isolate a particular thesis and development, perhaps by circling or pasting together collected thoughts. This selection process involves scrutinizing all points for logic, adaptation to the reader, and harmony with the writer's experience. At this point the writer might turn to the third part of the invention procedure, research, to fill in the gaps in knowledge. Hepburn feels that some background reading might precede meditation, but students should wait until their opinions are well-formed to direct their research before turning to more reading. He thus overturns the common advice for writers (read thoroughly first, then analyze) and supports his emphasis on independent thinking with this quote from Edward Gibbon:

> After a rapid glance on the subject and distribution of a new book, I suspend the reading of it, which I only resume after having examined the subject in all its relations; after having called up in my solitary walks all that I have read, or thought, or learned in regard to the subject of the whole book or of some chapter in particular. I thus place myself in a condition to estimate what the author may add to my general stock of knowledge, and I am thus sometimes favorably disposed by the accordance, sometimes armed by the opposition of our views. (pp.41-42)

Although some of my students didn't need more information at this point, one did more thoroughly examine the vacation prices in Memphis and another reviewed the Knoxville police's plans for football weekends, to make sure their arguments were indeed sound.

Only with the topoi, meditation and reading completed should the student begin to write a rough draft, following a general plan and working on the body and then on the introduction and conclusion. Students should first concentrate on the ideas and the needs of the audience, and focus on style and grammar in a next draft. Thus, with extensive notes and a plan, my students tried to convince Knoxvillians to visit Memphis or convince Tennessee teachers to support the governor's master teacher plan. These drafts were then reviewed in class by other students.

Beginning writers, who tend to chose general subjects and then spend little time probing them, like Lynn from Emig's study of twelfth graders, profit from first examining a subject broadly, answering questions involving "modes" we usually separate, and choosing an angle best suited to the interest of reader and writer. Then, following Hepburn's plan, they must take that angle and show that they have thoroughly considered it--drawn it to their own experience and values. Next they fill in gaps in their knowledge by directed reading, without just accepting published opinions.

Measuring concrete data on such a heuristic is difficult because for each paper there can be no meaningful "control," but I offer these results: 70% of my students said they would use the method again in other courses; 60% used it when I did not require it. I found developed subjects and commitment to writing, enjoyment in reading over each other's pre-writings and thus involvement in another student's entire project. And I also found that my grades were higher--with a 15-20% increase in A's and B's.

Although the nineteenth century was not a particularly productive time for rhetorical theory, teachers were daily trying to help students to write. Alexander Bain and Genung's four forms of discourse did influence instruction, but they did not stop teachers like A. D. Hepburn from considering the workings of the mind, and thus facing Young's "either-or" conflict. Like other nineteenth century rhetoricians, Hepburn offers experience and practical insights helpful in our classrooms.

Notes

[1] Richard E. Young, "Arts, Crafts, Gifts, and Knacks," Visible Language, 4, (1980), p. 341.

[2] A. D. Hepburn, Manual of English Rhetoric (New York: Van Antwerp, 1875), p. 25.

[3] Frank D'Angelo, Process and Thought in Composition, (Cambridge, Mass.: Winthrop, 1980), pp. 44-45.

[4] D. Gordon Rohman, "Pre-Writing: The Stage of Discovery in the Writing Process," College Composition and Communication, 16, (May 1965), p. 110.

[5] Peter Elbow, Writing Without Teachers (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973), pp. 12-47.

ARIZONA ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS IN WRITING

The following students from Arizona high schools have been named winners in NCTE's annual Achievement Awards in Writing competition. These students were juniors last February when their entries were submitted. Congratulations to them all and to their English teachers.

JULIA ALLEN, Rincon High School, Tucson
CHRIS CAMPOLONGO, Central High School, Phoenix
MONTY CARSON, Dobson High School, Mesa
SUSAN CONNOR, Shadow Mountain High School, Phoenix
SUZANNE CROMWELL, Sahuaro High School, Tucson
CHRISTINA CUDA, Prescott High School, Prescott
SANDRA MIKE, Chaparral High School, Scottsdale
JAMES NINTZEL, Rincon High School, Tucson
MARY R. SCOTT, Central High School, Phoenix

The State Coordinator is Beverly Merrill, Tempe.

THE NEED FOR A GRAMMATICAL VOCABULARY

Susan Hye

A professor writes "CS" above a comma on a student's paper or, if generous with his or her time, writes "comma splice." The conscientious student, never having heard of a comma splice, then visits the professor and asks what a comma splice is. "It is a comma," comes the reply, "between two independent clauses that are not joined by a coordinating conjunction." But what is an independent clause? What is a clause, let alone an independent clause? And what is a coordinating conjunction? A "CS" or "comma splice" written on a student's paper is not as simple a comment as it may seem at first.

I was an English major two quarters into upper division English classes at Western Washington University when a professor gave me my first "comma splice" notation, and like the student in the scenario above, I had never heard of such an entity. Did it mean that I had added something I should not have added, left something out, or put in a comma instead of some unknown punctuation? The professor explained that I needed a coordinating conjunction after the comma and that coordinating conjunctions were the one-syllable words "and, but, or, nor, so, for, yet." Since my commas seemed to be in the right places in sentences, I didn't bother to ask what the coordinating conjunctions coordinated. If I had asked, I would have needed further explanations since I didn't know what a clause was. I never even considered asking if there were any other kinds of conjunctions than coordinating ones.

I then managed to fly with top grades through another English course that required sentence diagraming tests--still not knowing what a "clause" was. I drew all the right lines indicating noun clauses, adjectival clauses, and adverbial clauses. I was lucky. Somehow I recognized that "those types of things" in a sentence were diagrammed in "that way."

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This article and the one by Ronald Santora which follows represent an unknowing collaboration. Although submitted at different times, I happened to read them in succession and thought they made a perfect pair. There's serendipity for you! M.F.

But many other students in the class were not as lucky. Maybe more of them would have understood diagraming better if they had known what a clause was; my work the following quarter tutoring four students struggling with sentence diagraming led me to think so. Once these students learned the simple fact that a clause usually contains a subject and verb (I had looked up "clause" in a friend's handbook), their ability to recognize subordinate clauses rapidly increased.

But you can't define a clause as a group of related words that contains a subject and verb if the students don't know what a subject or a verb is. Instructors can too easily assume that students have these terms in their vocabulary. The students apparently know what subjects and verbs are--they are writing sentences with them. Or are they? They are writing what you call a "subject" and a "verb," but they might not have a name for these patterns of words that they are putting down on paper.

Most of the time it doesn't matter what words or groups of words are grammatically called; millions of people get along fine without grammar terms in their vocabulary, the same way they function well without knowing that "divisor" is the name of the number on the bottom of a fraction. But whether or not a teacher and student share a grammatical vocabulary makes a difference when they want a common ground on which to discuss grammatical-level refinements of writing skills.

Suppose that as a teacher of basic composition you want to tell a student to use less flowery adjectives and more action verbs. Do you know if your student understands the term "adjective"? Several Writing Clinic tutors at WWU, including myself, worked with students who could not identify an adjective, and I suspect we were working with the tip of an iceberg. And "action verbs"? I have tutored two students who weren't sure what a "verb" was, let alone an "action verb."

One quarter at the Writing Clinic I was trapped in a grand way into overestimating one student's grammar vocabulary. Her status as a graduate student, along with the fact that she wrote most of her sentences with subjects and verbs, threw me off-guard. Because she wasn't using commas after introductory clauses, I started her working in Myers' Writing With Confidence on the chapter dealing with subordinate clauses. When we discussed subordinate clauses that came at the end of sentences instead of at the beginning, I found that she couldn't differentiate between a subordinating conjunction and a coordinating conjunction, so we backtracked to exercises on the latter. We talked about watching out for subordination and coordination in sentences with two or more sets of subjects and verbs.

My tutee did the exercises, but she would giggle nervously when explaining her choice of punctuation. I should have caught the clues, but I didn't. She was never quite sure where commas went, so we again backtracked, this time to basic exercises on comma use in series. When we talked about not separating compound verbs with a comma, she finally admitted, "I'm not really sure what a verb is." She also didn't know what a subject was. Earlier, when she had been "identifying" for me subjects and verbs in compound and complex sentences, she had been like I was when I drew sentence diagrams--making lucky guesses by vaguely recognizing a pattern without understanding it to the point where a definition fit a concept.

Once I became aware that my tutee had never developed a basic grammatical vocabulary, I found that she did not have "adverb" in her working vocabulary either. Since adverbs didn't trigger a bell for her as a conceptual group, she was in no position to use them to identify the beginnings of adverbial clauses.

If my tutee had originally come to me with faulty verb usage, as a student had the previous quarter, I might have been more cautious in checking out her basic knowledge of grammar. While it is too late to recover our wasted time, I learned my lesson: never assume a grammatical vocabulary in students studying English, no matter what their class status or apparent writing ability is.

You might say that students should already know grammatical terms when they enter college. It would be nice if they all did, but they don't. The only way basic composition staff are going to know if students understand grammatical terms is to pre-test. "Not enough time," some teachers might complain. But perhaps much more time is wasted when teachers talk to students in a vocabulary that students do not understand. And because many students will hide their ignorance by silence or by an affirming nod of the head, there is no way teachers can know if they are adequately communicating if they don't pre-test--and post-test.

You might also argue that it doesn't matter if students know grammatical terms, just that they write well. How many papers, however, can a teacher correct without making a grammatical reference?

Beyond basic composition courses, students of English need to be re-tested for grammar vocabulary where writing skills are taught if their teachers want to be sure they ar fully communicating with their students. English education majors, in particular, should be re-tested for grammatical vocabulary competence before they are cast out into schools where _they_ need to communicate clearly with their students. In addition, English education majors should be checked on the more advanced vocabulary of writing, such as "thesis," "coherence," "transition," and "development." Perhaps a strengthening of pre- and post-testing of grammatical vocabulary in the college setting will in turn strengthen the teaching of writing in the public schools.

BASIC BACKGROUND ON COMPETENCY TESTING

The simplistic arguments offered for and against competency testing in recent years underscore the continuing confusion clouding the issues of statewide testing for minimal competencies. A new book from NCTE, The Nature and Measurement of competency in English, cuts through the rhetoric that has been lavished on this controversial issue. In plain language it supplies the kinds of background information that educators and responsible citizens need in order to make rational choices

The heart of the book is John Mellon's review, for the general reader, of findings of current research into language acquisition, development, and use. Mellon, of the University of Illinois at Chicago Circle, points to the confusion at the heart of the competency debate. It is important to realize, he stresses, that language competency as defined by linguists is an innate ability not governed by I.Q., and that all children with normal brain function possess it when they enter school. No normal child is "language deficient." Competency tests, in fact, test performance only of selected language tasks.

In the light of this knowledge, Mellon explains, it is "dead wrong" to assume that children "less intellectually and culturally favored" are not "ready" to go on using their linguistic systems in speaking, reading, and writing. The current practice of isolating and drilling remedial students kills rather than cures.

THE NATURE AND MEASUREMENT OF COMPETENCY IN ENGLISH, edited by Charles R. Cooper. 176 pages, paper. Price: $12.45; NCTE members, $9.95. ISBN: 0-8141-3262-6. LC: 81-11005. Available from NCTE, 1111 Kenyon Rd., Urbana, IL 61801. Stock No. 32626.

HOW MUCH GRAMMAR FOR REMEDIAL STUDENTS?

SOME BASIC CRITERIA TO HELP TEACHERS DECIDE

Ronald A. Santora

Every teacher of writing knows that teaching "correctness" is never an all-or-nothing situation. One cannot teach _all_ grammar, _all_ usage, _all_ punctuation. And most teachers of the weakest and least fluent writers learn early to overlook a great many "errors." But because so many errors are so glaring, the demands of correctness cannot and should not be overlooked altogether. But _what to stress and what to ignore?_ For several years now the following criteria have helped me enormously in my remedial composition class at CSUS.

1. _How often?_ How often does the incorrect verb form, the usage problem, the misspelling occur when the student writes? Once a page? Three times? Half a dozen? Once every five pages? Once every twenty? An erroneous _like_ in place of _as_, for example, though irksome whenever it appears, is rather rare as compared to the verb _be_ which is universal: no one can write for long without employing some form of the verb _be_ either as a main verb or as an auxiliary though one might write for pages without a _like/as_ choice. So criterion #1 is this: the most frequently occurring items take precedence over all other mechanical problems.

2. _How Important?_ "Good grammar," standard punctuation, and so on are academic matters for teachers, but for students and the public at large these "basics" are social issues. The public unconsciously rates all matters of correctness. It sees some matters as more indigenous to the lower class than others. A run-on or a missing possessive apostrophe rarely dooms an application to the circular file. But the public is compassionless toward double negatives or certain incorrect past participles.

3. _Pedagogical Difficulty._ How much valuable

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This article is one person's answer to some of the questions raised by Susan Hye in the previous article.

classroom time (perhaps best spent writing and revising) will be needed to make a frontal assault on some aspect of correctness? The identification of subjects and verbs for purposes of determining agreement affords a good illustration. To recognize subjects and verbs easily students must first be able to identify:

a) nouns, for subjects are usually nouns,

b) personal pronouns, since these are frequently subjects,

c) prepositions and their objects, for these objects are often incorrectly identified as subjects and account for many agreement problems to begin with,

d) and the complete verb with auxiliaries.

Then and only then can one focus on the concept of number, time permitting. Obviously in my classroom agreement will have to wait. An interesting irony in this regard is that many remedial workbooks begin with agreement. Page upon page of grammar. When do the students write?

4. Payoff. How long do I have to wait to see improvement? In a sense this criterion subsumes all others. If an error occurs frequently and I can find a way to teach it quickly without getting lost in a tangle of grammatical terminology, I should begin to see the results of my efforts right away. For example, I can quickly teach the differences among they're, their, and there by process of elimination. I tell my students that all there's are suspect. The first step in finding the right form is to re-read the sentence and substitute they are for the there. If they are makes sense, then the student should use the form with the apostrophe: they're. If not, one of the other forms is correct. There contains the word here and both words indicate place. Is the word in reference to place, as in "Are the books over there?" If so, the student should use the there with the here in it. If not, then the student has only one choice left: their. While on the one hand this approach neatly avoids a discussion of possession (never easy), on the other hand it does not cover the expletive there as a sentence opener. But luckily the incidence of error with the expletive there is low, so I never mention this. Thanks for small miracles. Following direct instruction,

whenever a student has a problem with a *there*, he may turn to the dittoed crib sheet I've given him, or if in the classroom, he may look up at my they're-there-their wall poster. Or he may ask me for help. Once covered in class, usage mistakes are not permitted on final copies. I enforce this rule ruthlessly.

Applying these criteria to all grammar/usage/spelling/punctuation problems, I have concluded that I can generally limit my teaching on correctness to the following:

1. The most troublesome homophones:

   they're-there-their
   it's-its
   two-too-to
   you're-your
   who's-whose
   have-of
   than-then
   no-know

   These words occur so frequently and are so often misused that for the weakest writers mastery of these alone can often build confidence. For the first time the student can see himself in control--if only of a small portion of what needs to be mastered. Most of these homophones lend themselves easily to explanation without grammar. Let me offer one more illustration. To explain the *have-of* distinction, I give my students a list of the modals--should, would, can, may, might, etc. I tell them that if one of these words occurs right before the *have* or *of*, then they should make sure they have written *have*.

   Of course no approach to distinguishing between homophones or handling other usage or spelling problems is entirely accurate. But the choice is between an easily remembered adage and a long lesson in grammar.

2. All forms of the verbs *be*, *have*, *do*, *and* *go*, *come*, *see*, *eat*. The first three are both stem verbs and auxiliaries. Both the occurrence and the frequency of error are very high, especially among non-standard speakers. I give my students a ditto with all the forms of *be*, *have*, and *do* for simple present, past, and future. I label the tenses Yesterday-Today-Tomorrow to avoid the term "tense." As they write or proofread their work, they refer to the handout. Interestingly enough, as they ask for help with these verbs and consult the ditto, they begin to see subject and verb combinations on their own. I have included here the verbs *come*, *go*, *see* and

eat because of their frequency of occurrence (reasonably high) and the high incidence of error among non-standard speakers, both black and white, whether urban, blue collar or rural. In addition, misuse of these verbs is highly stigmatized. You may wish to add a few more commonly occurring irregular verbs to this list since the misuse of certain past participles is highly stigmatized, but the longer the list, the less the payoff. I have found it best to deal individually with other problems with irregulars as they occur.

3. Double negatives are also highly stigmatized. My ditto and wall chart contain a list of the most common words and phrases which indicate negation: no, never, ever, can't, don't, not, n't, etc. The advice is: one per sentence. If the student can't rewrite the sentence on his own, he must at least indicate on his papers that he knows he has a double negative. Then I devote a few minutes to helping the student rewrite the sentence. With this problem the progress is slow but steady. I repeatedly tell my students that if they can spot a mistake, it's 90% corrected.

4. Punctuation. At the very least I introduce my students to the most common conjunctions. Among the coordinating conjunctions I emphasize *and*, *but*, *for*, *yet*, *so*. And I list about fifteen subordinating conjunctions. My wall chart for conjunctions looks like this:

A) Sentence ,and Sentence.
,but
,for
,vet
,so

B) When Sentence , Sentence.
If
Because
Since
Although
Etc.

Obviously, most basic writers do not know what a sentence is grammatically, but all native speakers do have an intuitive sense of "word groups"--where phrases and clauses separate, where one structural unit ends and another begins. Even the weakest writers usually know where something should go--a period, a comma, or "nothing"--they just don't know what choice to make. At those junctures--where run-ons are common--I tell my students that if they use an *and* or a *but*, a *for*, *yet*, or *so*, then they should use a comma beforehand. And if they have a run-on, then they should add one of the five conjunctions, whichever makes the most sense. As for and's in other places, as in compound subjects for instance, my students intuitively see these units as whole word groups and fortunately overlook them in the period/comma maze. When subordinating conjunctions open sentences, I tell my students there's a comma coming up. They can usually guess where.

Obviously this approach is simplistic, but it is reasonably accurate and acknowledges the fact that language learning is largely an intuitive process. Basic writers especially need to understand that good writing results from learning to make good judgments--better guesses each trial--at both the sentence and whole discourse levels. At the very least, such encouragement makes my students really look at sentence structure for the first time. As a result, they become better at combining sentences and at writing coherent paragraphs. As for punctuating appositives and items in a series, since my students commit very few errors regarding these two kinds of punctuation, usually only minimal instruction is required.

Basic writers need to gain confidence, build stamina, take risks, and feel comfortable enough with pen in hand to write freely on paper for an hour at a time. In short, they need to become fluent. Insisting on correctness with regard to the common homophones, double negatives, final /ed/, etc. helps develop fluency. If students must pause every line to ponder a you're/your or a be verb choice, they will never be in control of any writing situation.

What can be overlooked?

a) The possessive apostrophe. Pedagogically very difficult because possessive "s" is easily confused with the letter "s" in so many other contexts: third person singular, plurals, and other non-standard deletions. With basic writers teaching the possessive creates more problems than it solves. Moreover, the error is not highly stigmatized.

b) Subject/Verb Agreement

c) Pronoun agreement

d) Miscellaneous usage errors--like/as, who/whom, that/which, etc. These errors concern editing correctness, not the development of fluency, and are best amended at the end of the writing process--during final proofreading.

One final note. Although I have emphasized correctness, I take it as axiomatic that one learns to write by writing and by sharing what is written with an audience--one's classmates and teachers. Good first efforts should be revised and strong final efforts published for classroom distribution. Sharing develops the concept of writing for a readership; publication establishes pride in what one does. Both are essential for getting reluctant writers to take risks on paper and to risk more (quality and quantity) each time. Writing and "grammar" can be taught simultaneously, and I now feel more secure with the mechanics of writing because I know just how much I must initially concern myself with and why.

IN HELPING YOUR CHILD LEARN TO WRITE, IT'S WHAT YOU SAY THAT COUNTS

Writing specialist Shirley Haley-James says that adults, through their reactions to children's writing, can cause their youngsters either to love writing or to hate it. Haley-James, a Professor at Georgia State University, discussed "Helping Students Learn through Writing" at the 1983 Spring Conference of NCTE in Seattle.

"If you want to help a child write, it's a good idea to think about how you reacted when that child was learning to talk," she says. "Instead of pointing out errors, teachers and parents ought to notice first what the child is writing about and react to that."

Haley-James gives some further suggestions on how to help children organize and process information. "Take some note cards or pieces of scratch paper and have the child jot ideas down," she says. "He or she can then arrange and rearrange the papers, see how they can be grouped, and talk about what works best. Doing this helps to answer the question: What is this piece of writing really about? Maybe it shows that something important is missing and some more reading is needed."

This sort of playing around with content involves the child in "the kinds of thinking that must be done to control a piece of writing--thinking about what's going to make sense. Writing is not an easy task. Parents need to remember it's a matter of thinking, then writing, then thinking some more, then revising what you wrote."

FIVE EASY PARAGRAPHS

Susan Lang-McMonagle

In 1580 Montaigne published a collection of prose discussions in the belief that his natural way of presenting his ideas would present his self to the reader as well. "I correct the faults of inadvertance, not of habit," he said when criticized for his lack of style, and continued to write "a book consubstantial with its author." He called his discussions "attempts" or Essais.[1] In England, Bacon adopted the title as well as the style for his own writings, and thus the English essay was born. Through the following centuries the newborn flourished as it grew toward maturity. Its growth, however, was prematurely stifled, hardening into the senile form found in freshman composition courses. Traditionally the term "essay" referred to a kind of written verbal rambling that expressed any author's personal views on a subject which caught her fancy. Necessarily a quite un-uniform form resulted from the blend of an author's unique voice with the possibilities of his ideas, making it difficult to say just what an essay actually was. During the late 19th century, however, there was a change in the essay tradition, a focusing on form rather than the ideas expressed.[2] For, gradually, after years of frustration, trying to teach and define a mutable form for bewildered composition students--not many of whom were Bacons or Montaignes--teachers of composition--most of whom were also neither Bacons nor Montaignes--began to standardize the essay, confining compositional boundaries to definable teachable "types" of essay. But the full impact of their quasi-empirical approach was not fully felt until the invention of the five paragraph argumentative essay, a form which effectively limits thought, inhibits creativitity, and bores even the writer himself.[3]

The essay had originally been a method of exploration and self-discovery, a method of uncovering ideas with words. The five paragraph essay, however, inhibits spontaneous exploration by prescribing a form not organic to the idea itself. And, it is after all, easier to construct a clear and concise thesis, stripped of clumsy, though speculative and exciting possibilities, and neatly divide it into three areas to be superficially developed in separate paragraphs. Writers learn not to mess up

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their organization with exploration of complex connections which do not quite fit the thesis division, or, Heaven forbid, the clear and concise thesis itself. Such an exploration, for example, suggesting a connection between the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis regarding the influence of linguistic form on thought processes and the limitation of thought encouraged by the formal mechanics of the five paragraph essay, has been foregone; the unsubstantiated, speculative conclusions would place a fatal strain on the structure of this five paragraph essay. For in the five paragraph essay each idea is required to directly and empirically support the skeletal thesis; if it does not, it is discarded--regardless of its underlying importance to the main ideas of the essay. Thought cannot roam freely, caught in the five paragraph corral.

Thought cannot be confined, of course, without also confining that enigmatic dimension of self called creativity (and whether there exists an actual separation between thought and creativity, or simply a convenient classification for my thesis division, cannot be a concern in this essay, since exploration of this matter would not support my thesis and might even undermine my mechanics). In the five paragraph essay, creative thought is severely inhibited in both reader and writer. A writer learns to place words into established forms, learns to ignore alternative shapes that might well develop if each idea were explored in a way natural to the writer-thinker. Instead, writers sit down to write--and connect the dots. And what of the reader? Readers also learn to expect forms as conventional as the devices of oral medieval poetry. Readers can no longer enjoy the witty or passionate digressions which often contain the best of a writer, without feeling a gnawing sense of academic discord. But then most writers today have learned to edit out these flow flaws. Bacon wouldn't have made it through a basic writing class, unless, of course, he'd straightened up his act.

Without the challenges of free ranging thought, a writer gets bored. The excitement generated by each idea quickly diminishes when confronted by the limitations imposed on its expression and development by the five paragraph form. The fun is gone; a writer cannot freely explore the reasonable linguistic potentials of his ideas. Nor can the writer get caught up in his own convictions, but must pretend formal objectivity and play by empirical rules that were never followed in even the most serious and sonorous of written argumentative discourse, and perhaps especially not there--imagine Milton using the form and spirit of the five paragraph essay in the Areopagitica Writers learn to disguise honest bias with evidence presented in words which will more deviously convince a reader of their Truth. The Bored readers, of course, are not convinced, knowing how they are being manipulated; it is simply a new twist to the old rhetorical game. And they cannot even get caught up in the sway of the writer's convictions, since he has pretended to have none. The essay contains no voice, only selected and costumed evidence. The five paragraph argument manifests an artificial empirical rhetoric that has little to do with how either a reader or writer becomes convinced of anything, and certainly has nothing to do with how or why anyone--reader or writer--enjoys the essay form. The only readers convinced of the five paragraph essay's merit are the composition instructors who rejoice at the student's mastery of the essay form.

The five paragraph argumentative essay, with its clearly defined thesis, topic sentences developed and supported, has deformed the essay tradition. The essay had been one of the accepted demonstrations that truth cannot always be empirically supported, that truth can be contradictory, changing from day to day, from writer to writer, from reader to reader. One reader might say, for instance, that this five paragraph essay actually demonstrates a conclusion unsupportive of its thesis; another might say that the mechanical confines keep it from developing its potential persuasive power, thus demonstrating its own thesis; yet another might claim the essay fails to give enough empirical evidence to support its thesis--and we all know which reader this is; still another reader might be persuaded by the argument, despite and because of the paradoxes involved, reading from the outmoded essay tradition when thought was not tethered to thesis or hobbled by empiricism, when creativity did not stylize the mutable, when readers and writers were not bored by hollow voiceless echoes that put them to sleep on the procrustean bed of thought, the five paragraph essay.

Notes

[1] Donald Frame, Trans., _The Complete Essays of Montaigne_ (Stanford University Press, 1958), p. v.

[2] See Paul C. Rodgers on Alexander Bain in _The Quarterly Journal of Speech_, _8_, (1965), pp. 399-408.

[3] The writer would like to explore the obvious influence of the growth of empirical thinking on the development of the five paragraph essay, but such an exploration would not squeeze into the thesis divisions of this five paragraph essay.

A RECIPE FOR INSTANT MASHED POTATOES

Lee Sall

The five paragraph essay is a quick way out of the current compositional dilemma. It saves both students and teachers from perishing. The five paragraph essay is a lot like instant mashed potatoes, artificial, tasteless, but it can be served up quickly in a pinch. The present pinch has occurred because the college writing teacher has been given the task of bringing students' (and sometimes over 100 per semester) barely high school writing up to what we have deemed to be "college level" all this in one semester, or worse yet one quarter, of instruction. The students' job, of course, is to instantly shape up to "college level." Given the policies of open enrollment and the class sizes in our colleges and universities, this is just long of ridiculous. Definitely the situation is pinching both students and instructors.

And so the five paragraph essay comes to the rescue. It fills the compositional belly with its prepackaged ability to save many steps, redeeming students from academic deprivation. Students learn quite quickly to focus their formless, blurry ideas within its sturdy structure, a structure which in fact dictates a quasi-empirical approach. An argumentative essay, for example, fits nicely into the format: paragraph one, introduction and thesis; paragraph two, first reason; paragraph three, second reason; paragraph four, third reason; paragraph five, conclu- wion. And since a reason alone is not enough to fill a paragraph, the student is forced to say more, perhaps even to support each reason with facts, examples and appeals to authority if she is so instructed. Naturally some students will be better able to utilize this form. But then some brands of mashed potatoes taste more natural than others too.

The five paragraph essay also gives instructors some guidelines to use in grading. The criterion for determining what constitutes good essay writing varies drastically from reader to reader. Just how does one objectively judge writing quality beyond the error level? The five paragraph essay provides some answers. There are, for instance, some predetermined things that an instructor can look for, such as a "developed" introduction

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leading to a clearly stated thesis. There should follow three body paragraphs each with a topic sentence that frimly supports the thesis. Each sentence in these paragraphs must support its topic sentence. The last paragraph should be a conclusion which summarizes the content and relates it back to the thesis. With this litany in mind, the harried and hurried composition teacher can more easily scan her way through the stack of essays before her. She can regard non-supporting sentences or formal digressions as errors in much the same manner as she sees digression from conventional grammar and syntactic forms as error. Quality, then, can be more empirically regarded as adherence to formal as well as grammatic convention. A handy shortcut indeed.

The five paragraph essay is a shortcut in other ways as well. It saves both student and instructor from having to develop writing voice. Instead of attempting to find and develop each student's writing voice in 45 hours of instruction, teacher and student can more practically work on developing form or style in much the same way as in other types of technical writing. One does not 'find' or even use one's voice in such forms as memos, grant proposals, legal briefs or scientific reports. Rather, one learns to fit into a conventional style. Using a prescribed form is also very practical in keeping both thought and style from getting unruly and creating compositional chaos--as when a student attempts a style he is not prepared to use, for ideas he is not equipped to deal with. A good grasp of the five paragraph essay all but guarantees that a student's ideas will not get out of hand or head. And, because like technical writing, the five paragraph essay presupposes its proper audience (in this case the composition teacher), its use further eliminates the need to develop true audience awareness. The writer need not learn to direct his writing to a fictitious "someone" out there, but only needs to make himself understood the the composition instructor, who is his "true" and only audience anyway.

The advantages of using the five paragraph form almost double when it is taught with the rhetorical modes such as argumentation, classification, definition, etc. It can then serve as a guide for discovering one's ideas. For instance, if Ms. Average Student is arguing a point, she will know better than to simply overdevelop one reason to justify her thesis--or than to list briefly seven interlinking reasons which are too difficult to separate into detailed paragraphs. The form will guide her thoughts to a more acceptable middle road. Or, when a student is defining or classifying, the five paragraph form will lead him out of confusion and help him to choose an acceptable number of defining or classifying points to develop. Not only will a student have the conventional rhetorical models to mimic, but a form within which to imitate them. After all, one needs both the ingredients and the recipe to prepare a decent dish.

Who says real potatoes are always the best choice? Doesn't this depend on the time available as well as on who's doing the cooking? True, a good cook can create a greater variety of dishes with real potatoes, and true, the texture and flavor of real potatoes may be more satisfying than the rather bland flavor and uniform texture one can effect with instant. But sometimes one must make trade-offs.

In short, there are certain advantages to instant mashed potatoes; they are devoid of the lumps often found in the natural kind; they hold their shape better. And, when one is short of the time and resources to prepare the real thing--as is the case in today's educational system--certainly, they are better than no potatoes at all. Aren't they?

SENIOR HIGH SEMINARS ON RECENT WRITERS OFFER HIGH-INTEREST WRITING TASKS

Can a senior high English course be both rigorous and popular with students?

"Yes," says Brooke Workman, author of WRITING SEMINARS IN THE CONTENT AREA. Workman's new book of course plans responds to the current concern for more critical reading and sustained writing in high school English programs. The author, a teacher at West High School, Iowa City, sets forth complete plans for three seminars, each a semester in length and each based on a single important American writer. The writers represented are Hemingway, Salinger, and Steinbeck.

Workman's approach involves the whole class in analyzing novels and short stories. Reading aloud and discussion help the students prepare for writing papers in which they state positions on the authors' aims in writing a given work. Coming to know one significant writer in some depth makes literature a more vivid experience for students, Workman believes. He is opposed to rapid survey courses.

WRITING SEMINARS IN THE CONTENT AREA: IN SEARCH OF HEMINGWAY, SALINGER, AND STEINBECK, by Brooke Workman. 322 pages, paperbound. Price: $13.75; NCTE members, $12. ISBN: 0-8141-5886-2. LC: 82-23966. Available from NCTE, 1111 Kenyon Rd., Urbana, IL 61801. Stock # 58862.

ANALOGICAL WRITING AND TEACHER/STUDENT INVENTION

Robert C. Wess

Since the advent of the Bay Area Writing Project in the early 1970's, there has occurred a commensurate interest in and growth of teacher writing. Not many teachers, however, have described either the use or usefulness of such writing for classroom instruction.[1] The present essay is an effort toward eliminating this pedagogical void. As such, it delineates a teacher's writing process used as model for student writing. Juxtaposed with this process are student efforts in composing their own essays of analogy. Discovered post factum, the pattern which "fits" both teacher and student essays is the fourfold method-of-inquiry model articulated by Richard E. Young and others, which includes preparation, incubation, illumination, and verification.[2]

To demonstrate the teacher process, an essay of analogy[3] which I myself had written, along with its accompanying notes, is used. To illustrate student processes, essays written by 39 students in two classes of English 101 during Fall Quarter 1981 are employed. In addition, these same students completed a five-point questionnaire about ideas and feelings generated by their essays,[4] hoped-for effect on audience, ranking of preparation materials, and specific tips picked up from the teacher model. Students also wrote retrospective essays, which recorded their processes in analogical writing as remembered.[5]

i

THREE PHASES OCCUR DURING THE PREPARATION STAGE OF INQUIRY: INITIAL AWARENESS OF A DIFFICULTY, FORMULATION OF THAT DIFFICULTY AS A PROBLEM, AND EXPLORATION OF THAT PROBLEM.

> I receive an invitation to write a guest editorial from the editor of The Robesonian, the local newspaper. Should I accept the assignment or not? After a few days, I respond with an affirmative reply. "Yes," I tell him, "I'll do it."
>
> But that decision is the easy one. The harder

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> part still remains--writing the essay itself. Since I am Coordinator of Composition at the local state college, I quickly focus on the question of what I should write about. The obvious answer is writing. My purpose crystallizes around the idea of informing my audience, a rural and small-town community, about the process of writing--its beginnings, laborious progress, and fruits of completion.
>
> My essay begins with a known--my knowledge of the writing process. The unknown, the analogy itself, has not yet been invented. My immediate concern is choosing a specific topic for this particular audience.

For students, initial awareness of the difficulty came with the announcement of the essay assignment itself. Student formulation of the task was fairly typical. As one student related: "Being told that we were required to do an in-class essay on analogy, I began trying to figure out what a good topic might be." Some students, however, initially reacted to the difficulty with "confusion," "dread," or "fear." Nevertheless, the process of internalizing the problem and owning it generally took place before individual exploration occurred. As one student said: "I knew I wanted my subjects to be exciting and interesting to readers of all age groups." To facilitate such exploration, I formulated two heuristics which I myself unconsciously used in writing the model essay. The first heuristic uses the communication triangle: 1. What is the topic I both know and enjoy that I wish to explain to others? 2. To whom am I trying to explain my topic? What specific group would I like to understand it? 3. What will be my role in communicating my topic to this audience? The second heuristic employs a problem-solving strategy: 1. Given this particular audience and my particular topic of interest, what analogy will best create an understanding of that topic? 2. What topic as an analogy do I and my audience both know about which will illuminate my topic of interest for them?

Individual methods for exploring the problem were varied. Some students explored it by reviewing either the concept of analogy, the examples taken in class, or both. Others directly reflected on possible topics. A few relied on discussion with friends or spouses. Several students, indeed, did discover their topics through such exploration. The most common method of exploration, however, was brainstorming. An architectural engineering technology major, for example, said that "after brainstorming for ideas, it came to me that I should write on something I know a little about." The construction of a building became his topic. "Then I began writing down things which were similar to my topic that would make a good comparison for an analogy." The resultant essay compared house construction to baking a cake for people who know little or nothing about architecture. Another student who had played high school basketball decided to focus on the teamwork involved in playing basketball, a topic he knew very well. His goal focused on thinking "of things that could be used to help describe basketball in analytical terms." As a result, his analogy compared the operation of a good basketball team to that of a finely tuned piece of machinery.

ii

FOLLOWING THE PREPARATION STAGE IS "A PERIOD OF SUBCONSCIOUS ACTIVITY THAT IS SOMEWHAT MYSTERIOUS AND HARD TO DISCUSS EXPLICITLY." THIS INCUBATION PERIOD, THOUGH OFTEN IGNORED, IS A VITAL PART OF THE INQUIRY PROCESS. THE SUBCONSCIOUS INTELLIGENCE IS NOT ONLY "A STRONG AND VITAL FORCE IN OUR MENTAL LIFE THAT SEEMS TO HAVE A GREATER CAPACITY THAN REASON FOR DEALING WITH THE COMPLEX AND THE UNFAMILIAR," IT ALSO "CONTINUES TO WORK EVEN AFTER THAT PERSON HAS SHIFTED HIS ATTENTION TO OTHER MATTERS."

THE THIRD STAGE IS THAT OF ILLUMINATION WHEN "THERE IS AN IMAGINATIVE LEAP TO A POSSIBLE SOLUTION, A HYPOTHESIS." SINCE THIS SOLUTION IS DEPENDENT ON THE UNCONSCIOUS ACTIVITY OF THE MIND, "ONE CAN NEVER BE SURE JUST WHEN IT WILL COME."

> I ruminate over possible essay topics for several days. As days stretch past a week, I begin to worry about meeting my deadline. I even begin looking over student essay topics for possible leads. Still without a clearly defined topic, I realize the deadline is near. I decide that I must simply sit down and start writing. I think to myself that maybe I'll find my topic if I just start writing, so that's what I do.
>
> As I begin brainstorming, I jot down a possible topic: Uses of Description: 1. In studying blood types, must read description. 2. In survey work, make reports. 3. In claims we do work. I move on in my thinking to 2. Importance of Agriculture in Robeson County, big buck big plant. Not yet satisfied, I again move on: 3. Writing, big dividends in Robeson County. My mind moves my pen to Point Four: 4. Focus on students I see: want to be a success; "Writing" is a primary tool of educated man. What a plough does for the farmer, the pen does for the writer. Both open up resources which later will reap a harvest.
>
> I now see my topic in terms of this analogy. Writing is to education as ploughing is to farming. I have gotten an insight, and this illumination will become the basis for my essay.

Here, as in the other stages of inquiry, students exhibited various manifestations of the unconscious mind at work. The common denominator of these manifestations is the time interval during which the conscious mind focuses on something else or is dormant in sleep, while the subconscious mind continues to work on the solution.

A number of students specifically recalled the period of time just before illumination. For one, it came as a break from study: "After a great deal of thought and no solutions, I decided to take a coffee break. I began to cook dinner, putting all my thoughts concerning English in the back of my mind." It was during this break that she discovered her topic--comparing the human mind to a computer. A male student described his incubation period as a time of mental drifting:

> I was thinking of what I would write when my mind started to drift. I started thinking about my classes, my friends, and even why I was here at this school. Later, my mind drifted to the past to when I was little. I started thinking of the things I did then. It was then I thought of a topic.

His topic became the comparison of his lifelong interest in art compared to the writing of an essay.

Incubation period and discovery also manifested themselves while the writer was performing another conscious activity. For one it was studying:

> Having thought about it [a good topic] for while and still drawing a blank, I lay down on my bed to catch up on some algebra homework. As I did a few matrices, a title popped into my head. After doing another [math] problem, I came up with my analogy.

For another student, the conscious activity was leisure-time reading:

> I got my first idea when I was reading Road and Track, a sportscar magazine. I was reading an article about an Austin Martin. In it, the writer was describing the all-aluminum, double-cam engine in the car. The engine was a beautiful work of art and each engine was built by one mechanic. And when the engine was completed, the mechanic placed a gold plate that has his name on it, and when and where the engine was built. By reading this article I realized how masterful a

> mechanic must be.

The "first idea" referred to here is his appreciation of a mechanic, which he would compare to a physician; this idea provided the basis for his essay. Incubation for a third student came during a different leisure-time activity--playing electronic games. "At home I tried to think of a topic, but my frustration was making the assignment harder than it was. I went to the local arcade to relax and this is where my topic came into my head."

Several students placed the final phase of their incubation period specifically in sleep, a time in which the conscious mind is dormant. One such student had avoided his topic all day. In trying to focus on a topic, his mind wandered, or he got involved in doing something else. At bedtime, however, "as I drifted off to sleep, the different possibilities for a topic had completely overtaken my mind. I awoke the next morning with my mind glued to the same topic as the night before." A similar situation is described by another student: "It wasn't until about 1:00 a.m. that I woke up from my sleep with the idea of taking a test is like war."

iii

THE FOURTH STAGE OF THE INQUIRY PROCESS IS VERIFICATION. THIS STAGE IS THE TESTING STAGE OF THE HYPOTHESIS. MEANS FOR TESTING THE ILLUMINATION CAN BE VARIED, FROM INFORMAL STRATEGIES TO SCIENTIFIC EXPERIMENTATION. IT IS THE STAGE OF CONSCIOUS REASON PROBING AND EXAMINING THE INSIGHTS GAINED TO MAKE SURE THEY ARE SOUND AND ACCURATE. IN THIS STUDY, TWO METHODS OF VERIFICATION ARE USED: INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL.[6]

> I feel inspired as I awake in the morning. I run for pen and paper since I feel ready and anxious to write the essay. Ideas come swiftly, surely. I am confident that I have "found" my topic, one which will appeal to newspaper readers.
>
> Several weeks later, the essay is published. Friends and colleagues read it with pleasure. My departmental chairman congratulates me on the interesting analogy. A local businessman tells me how nice it is to know that English teachers can write.

For students, internal verification came as a sense of rightness about their analogies even after examination and close scrutiny. Although this process is rational, students described it as a good feeling, a feeling of satisfaction or rightness about the topic. For some, this feeling came quickly, during pre-writing. A male student, for example, who had compared construction to cakebuilding, said: "At first it was hard to find a good topic to write on, but after writing ideas on my knowledge of construction, the analogy became easy to write." Another young man related that he "chose a structure which seemed to flow smoothly. Words and specific description came naturally."

Others got such a feeling while writing or rewriting. One student related that "when it came time for the writing to begin, the words and sentences began to roll remarkably easy." Another stated: "All the facts had been brought and the essay was easy. I breezed along with ideas coming from left and right." One student expressed his satisfaction after writing: "Feeling confident with the body of my analogy, I felt no need to rewrite anything."

For several students, hypothesis-testing required topical alterations either during pre-writing, writing, or rewriting. One student discovered during pre-writing that "there were many aspects of life which didn't apply to chess at all. Clearly my job was to narrow the subject of life down to something simpler. I came up with society almost immediately." Another revised his topic both during writing and rewriting, each time narrowing his focus, first from comparing football to life (pre-writing), then from comparing football to going to college (writing), and finally to comparing football with taking a test. At this point he commented: "This topic was more specific than the other two; therefore, I was able to form a more specific and detailed analogy." This retrospective analysis underscores Richard E. Young's caveat to resist "the impulse to commit yourself to a solution too quickly."[7]

External verification in this study came with the instructor's evaluation. Since such a high percentage of the students (87%) wrote complete analogies at a satisfactory or higher level, this phase of verification checked out positively. External verification, however, could also have included other means of evaluation as well, such as peer reading and critiquing. Such a method could provide an alternate and equally valuable means of external verification.

Conclusion

At the onset, the essay of analogy appeared difficult to these students. Some even imagined it to be the hardest essay type they ever had to write. Through exploration and invention of topics, however, student facility and enjoyment increased. As one student stated retrospectively: "When I first thought about doing an analogy, I thought it would be impossible. Now that I have done one, it doesn't seem too hard. As a matter of fact, I kind of like them."

But what can be said of the teacher model? How had it been significant? The teacher model functioned to present a realistic, real-life model of the processes involved in writing the essay of analogy. First, it enabled students to see the mode subordinated to end; that is, the teacher model was written with a specific purpose and for a particular audience. Using analogy in itself was the means to achieve that aim. Second, the teacher model allowed students to see the use of audience-based and problem-solving heuristics hands-on, not through abstract definition but through practical application. Third, it illustrated the importance of pre-writing, that period preliminary to writing itself in which many creative discoveries useful for writing are made. As one student reflected: "The most important tip [from the teacher model] would be the pre-writing. Pre-writing played an essential role in my essay. Without it my essay would have been a flop."

The teacher model provided other advantages as well, in terms of invention, structure, development, and diction. One student commented: "The teacher models helped me generate my own essay the most." Several students said "patterned my outline from the teacher essay." Others said that the teacher essay "gave an example of format and structure" and that "the patterns of the teacher essays were important." In terms of development, the teacher example helped several students learn "that the analogy must be carried all the way through." Even regarding diction, students learned from the teacher model the use "of descriptive words which will describe both examples . . . and of the importance of concrete words and phrases."

The value of the analogical essay is evident both from student comments and from their ability to invent ideas for writing the essay successfully. Looking at the student analogies written as products of invention, one may view their discoveries in terms of the communication triangle: writer, audience, and message. As to writer, one former high school baseball player stated that "my use of analogy gave me new insight on college life." Another said: "I understood more of what a mechanic's work was like and how important it is." Someone else commented that "I had never before considered how chess characters compare with the social classes." As to audience, one student writer suggested that "the analogy may help the reader to see new insights of how society is cruel [as pawns easily disposed of]." The audience, identified as any high school baseball player by one writer, "can see how hard college will be and since he can relate to it through baseball [something he understands], it will be more memorable."

Regarding message, some student writers communicated purely cognitive messages: understanding the operation of a good basketball team, a human eye, the construction of a building, or the composing of a song or essay. In other instances, however, the message contained affective as well as cognitive data. One student, for example, stated that his analogy "made you appreciate the work a parent does when you think of him as a sculptor." Another student, a young lady who worked at Penney's in the credit department, also emphasized the affective function of her message. In comparing her job to working at a circus, she could now "look at work with a new attitude and enjoy it."

Finally, in classifying the insights of student writers in terms of knowledge discovered, it may be helpful to see that knowledge as a band or continuum: On the left side of this band is the range of knowledge already known; to the right side is knowledge less known or even predictive. Some student writers, dealing with knowledge on the left side of the band, found analogy useful "simply to organize or identify relationships between the terms."[8] They focused on such topics as comparing the human brain to a computer, building construction to cake making, and a basketball team to a machine. For others, however, whose knowledge included both left and right sides of the band, analogy was used in an exploratory, predictive way. For example, one student wrote: "I already knew how to care for a baby and a puppy [organizational function], but I didn't know it was so similar [exploratory and predictive function]." Another student who compared playing baseball to going to college wrote: "After the analogy, I could relate to college life more than before the essay." In this instance, college life is still relatively unknown, yet the student through the analogy has explored and predicted how it will be.

One female student, who compared belief in God to belief in Santa Claus, moved her thinking to the far right side of the continuum, "where the meaning of one of the terms is not known, [where] the analogy performs a predictive (heuristic) function and is selected from among other analogies only."[9] As she compared belief in God to belief in Santa Claus, the predictive function of her analogy "brought out the revelation [to her] of just how simple and almost childlike it is to be able to believe totally (no agnosticism)."

In addition to cognitive and affective insights, organizational and predictive functions, students extended their understanding of invention itself. One better understood the conceptual process of composing: "In writing and pre-writing the essay I seemed able to visualize an abstract process which before I had only done. It may seem strange but I never visualized writing a song. I just did it." Another transferred the writing of analogy to previous reading: "Now I realized that I have read a lot of stories with the usage of analogy." Others relfected on future usefulness" "It made me realize that I can compare two things that seem totally unrelated . . . that one known topic can be used to help clarify an unknown topic." But invention in the present also increased: "In writing an analogy I can now see many likenesses or bases for comparison that I didn't even realize before." One student even presented an example: "During the use of analogy I never thought of applying my own feelings until I was driving down the highway during the early morning hours. I realized my life could be compared with the lonely feeling of driving down the highway." And that comment came from a C- student! As such, it underscores the inventive powers which this assignment may unleash in students.

Notes

[1] One notable exception is Dick Friss, author of Writing Class: Teacher and Students Writing Together (Berkeley: Bay Area Writing Project, 1979).

[2] See Richard E. Young, Alton L. Becker, and Kenneth L. Pike, Rhetoric: Discovery and Change (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, Inc., 1970), Chapters Four through Seven. Quotations and paraphrases about the Inquiry Method presented in this essay are taken from Chapter Four, pp. 73-77.

As another example of a process model, see Linda Flower and John R. Hayes, "A Cognitive Process Theory of Writing," College Composition and Communication, 32, (December 1981), pp. 365-387. In their model, beginning with an initial problem, the writer sets goals in planning, translating, and reviewing. Illustrating the recursive nature of writing and the role of long- and short-term memory, the authors diagram a conceptual model of writing as process and problem solving.

[3] The definition of analogy used here is taken from the classroom text: "an analogy is basically a comparison--ordinarily an extended comparison--between two things usually thought of as unlike," whose purpose is "to make the reader see that thing (the unknown) in a new and fresh way." The two types given are literal and figurative. See Charlene and A. M. Tibbetts, Strategies: A Rhetoric and Reader (Glenview, Illinois: Scott, Foresman & Co., 1981), p. 166.

In addition, William J. J. Gordon's four types of analogy (personal, direct, symbolic, and fantasy) were briefly presented. See Synectics (New York: Collier MacMillan Co., 1961), pp. 34-56. Gordon's definition of direct analogy, "the actual comparison of parallel facts, knowledge, or technology" (p. 42) was equated with literal analogy.

[4] The generation of ideas, or invention, is defined

here as "the process of discovering ideas for . . . writing." See Frank D'Angelo, *Process and Thought in Composition* (Cambridge: Winthrop Publishers, Inc., 1980), p. 5. One use of analogy to stimulate invention hasbeen delineated by D. Gordon Rohman and Albert O. Wlecke in *Prewriting* (Washington: Research Project No. 2174, 1964), pp. 32-39 and 61-66.

[5] Students were *not* aware of Young's method of inquiry. It was only *post factum* that the process was seen to be applicable. Student comments cited in this essay are taken either from their essays, questionnaire responses, or retrospective essays. Bracketed material has been editorially added.

[6] These two methods for verifying the hypothesis are my ideas. They are *not* found in *Rhetoric: Discovery and Change*.

[7] Richard E. Young, Alton L. Becker, and Kenneth L. Pike, p. 77.

[8] James R. Wilcox and H. L. Ewbank, "Analogy for Rhetors," *Philosophy and Rhetoric*, *12*,(Winter 1979), p. 6.

[9] Wilcox, p. 8.

TEACHER OF THE YEAR TALKS ABOUT MOTIVATION

"Honesty is the best way to motivate students," National Teacher of the Year Leroy Hay said in a White House ceremony in April. "The students today are much more aware of the world out there than you or I were," he said. "Before you can teach them any lesson, they have to see the long-range value of it."

Hay, who has taught for 17 years and is chair of the English Department at Manchester (CT) High School, comments, "You can't tell them that what they learn will translate into tangible rewards. A high school diploma is not a key to employment any more, and some Ph.D.'s can't find jobs. The most important thing about a reading assignment is not *what* you're reading, but that you're learning to read and respond to ideas from other people, because that's what you're going to be doing all your life."

"Learning requires student involvement," Hay continues. To persuade students today to take demanding courses, the "English teachers at Manchester High School take an active role in guiding students. They talk to parents too. Sometimes parents don't recognize the basics," he says, "because we're not teaching spelling and grammar the way they were taught when they were in school."

"Teachers are working harder today than ever before," says Hay. "How are we going to entice better students into education? I don't have an answer. "I'd like the American public to think hard about that."

TEACHING THE RESEARCH PAPER TO THWART PLAGIARISM

Bruce W. Speck

Plagiarism is an important and effective way of getting a job done in our society. For instance, it is not unusual for committees to take credit for a report written by one individual or a select group of individuals within the committee. Ministers use the sermons of their brethren, though it may be necessary to cross denominational lines and edit a few heretical passages. The Supreme Court Justices write an opinion; sometimes dissenters may write another. Professors gather ideas from their seminars on selected topics that quite likely find their way into print. More literate relatives write letters for less literate relatives. Secretaries compose letters that their bosses sign without the least twinge of guilt. The government produces an enormous amount of literature simply authored by its printing office. Ditto the military. Companies produce brochures and promotion literature without acknowledging the author(s). Plagiarism is a fact of life. It is often an efficient way of getting a job done. So why do teachers get so upset when a student, quite by design, turns in a fellow student's paper and merely changes the title page?

I want to claim that there is a difference between the types of plagiarism I have just cited and the types of plagiarism students do. In making this distinction, I am not endorsing the examples of professional plagiarism listed; I merely say they are efficient, utilitarian. But this utilitarian argument is just the sort of argument that cannot be used to justify plagiarism in an academic setting because the academic setting is a training ground where skills are taught that are pertinent to society at large. The very nature of the job at the college level requires teachers to teach skills and students to learn these skills, and part of the job description for the student-writer states, "*You* write." And in this sense, the world of work and the world of academics are in accord: a job needs to be done.

Certainly, this very utilitarian approach to education appears to be an advocacy of skill building, but it is more than that. There are aspects of learning like appreci-

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ation, wonder, and creativity that are at the heart of education. Unfortunately, I have seen very few students who perceive education in this way. However, this does not mean the teacher should abdicate the ideal of education; rather, the teacher must integrate task performance with appreciation by showing how the classroom relates to the larger world surrounding the classroom. One might call this interplay between skills learned and skills used complementary utility. Part of the relevancy of teaching research papers is that the skills needed to do a research paper--gathering data, synthesizing ideas, expressing one's own findings in the written form--are skills one needs to survive in the world of work. Teachers do a great disservice to their students if these skills are not taught. Students who plagiarise do an even greater disservice to themselves.

These two types of disservices suggest two types of plagiarism, though the line between the two is certainly not always clear-cut. The first type of plagiarism is aided by the teacher. The second type is student induced. I have already mentioned student induced plagiarism. It occurs when a student simply uses another student's paper or gently duplicates an article from a published source. (This recently happened at the institution where I teach. A student turned in a paper that was a carbon copy of an article the student's professor had written.) I really have little to say about this type of plagiarism; it seems to me quite unethical and relatively indefensible. The first type, however, is much more complex, and I want to deal with it at length.

I have called the first type of plagiarism a disservice teachers do to their students, and I will try to defend this statement. But it is also important to recognize that there is a dynamic relationship in the classroom that is composed of a number of variables. Therefore, the very best of teachers may be unable to stimulate certain students, and the mediocre teacher may be able to reach students that even a very fine teacher is unable to reach. So I don't want to suggest that every failure in teaching can be directly attributed to either the teacher or the student. However, I do claim that the use of certain methods can greatly hinder or help students to learn. I content that the way we often approach the research paper causes our students to misunderstand the function of a research paper and even encourages them to plagiarize. Therefore, one reason many students write research papers that don't sound like their own work can be attributed to the way the research paper has been taught.

Because I do not intend to give a precise program for teaching the research paper, I simply want to discuss three problematic areas that need to be given careful attention if we intend to help students learn both the skills and creative aspects of the research paper. Therefore, let me turn to my first area.

I. The Library

Most students simply have not been faced with the demand of producing a paper that requires familiarity with at least one particular field represented by published material amassed in the library. And I'm not speaking merely about college freshmen. It is not infrequent to have even juniors and seniors admit that an assignment calling for a research paper is the first formal opportunity they have had to become acquainted with the library. They study in the library, but that's about the extent of their knowledge of its resources.

Now what type of experience does the typical student have when trying to use the library for that first research project? It is frustrating. The library is an august and imposing edifice, the depository of millions of bits and pieces of information. Certainly, there are various keys to help unlock the riches contained in this mammoth storehouse, but even these keys are not simple devices that merely unlock various treasure boxes with a flick of the wrist. Even the keys require instructions if they are to be used successfully. Therefore, the neophyte is perplexed and bewildered by the library and frustration quickly follows. Anger comes next and for those who are not willing to learn about the library system, one of three things generally happens: 1) they procrastinate, or 2) they do the least amount of effort required, or 3) they seek alternative means of fulfilling the assignment, i.e. they borrow another's research/final report. None of these alternatives seems very positive to me, and all three can lead to plagiarism; the procrastinator can run out of time and make a last-minute compromise by blatantly borrowing another's efforts, or turning in a paper that is poorly documented, i.e. a mass of unacknowledged quotations; those who do the least amount of effort run the same risk as the procrastinators, i.e. they document haphazardly, which is plagiarism, perhaps not intentional though a byproduct of careless work. These are all very real outcomes of a false assumption college teachers seem to share about the research skills students are supposed to possess. But let me be more specific about this assumption.

There are three things the teacher should consider in evaluating the research skills students possess. First, teachers should try to recall their first inauspicious attempts at library research. For instance, I remember spending hours in the library just trying to find out how to read an entry in the card catalog. Granted, I'm not a paragon of astuteness, but grant also that my experience was quite typical. Once a person has done a significant amount of research, the library is less intimidating;

but that's only because the researcher has learned the language of research, the difference between bound and unbound periodicals, what a call number is, how the card catalog functions, what a flexoline does, etc. And this knowledge was learned over a period of time punctuated by the frustrations that attend hunting for a bit of information in the midst of seemingly uncountable bits of information. If we, as teachers, can remember our first fumbling attempts at research, it will help us to realize that for the neophyte, the library is an old miser who only niggardly gives over his measly purse that seldom contains much more than foreign coins.

Second, teachers should not presuppose any prior experience in the library before the student's college days. This is not a comment on secondary education; I am not qualified to critique its curriculum. However, I do know that the teaching of the research paper is not learned, if not taught.

Third, and this is quite important, the teacher should assume the responsibility for teaching the students how to use the library. And although a library tour is a partial answer to this problem, it is not a complete answer. Certainly, a tour can be helpful, but it probably will only introduce a very confusing subject. What is really needed is on-hands experience in the library in preparation for doing research. This means that the teacher should go to the library with the students and show them how to do research. The teacher may take the students' topics and walk the students through the method the teacher uses to do research, or the teacher may select a topic and show the students how to research it. This will not only expose students to the physical layout of the library (the teacher can point out the current periodicals on the way to the reference section, for instance,) but will show them how to do research. I am not advocating a particular method of research, but the following points could serve as a basic course in library research:

1. Show the students how to construct a working bibliography.

    a) Show them how to cross-reference the card catalog to find "hidden" sources listed under synonymous or closely-related terms.

    b) Show them how to use the indexes. Again, show them how to cross-reference and find hidden sources.

    c) Show them how to use the bibliographies of books and articles they find to get sources that could be useful to them.

    d) Show them how to use the table of contents and index of a book to get data that could be valuable for their paper.

2. Show the students that the library staff is there to help them. This can be done quite simply by asking the librarian a question in a normal voice in the presence of the student. This should demonstrate that librarians are accessible and willing to help students.

If a teacher does these things, I suggest that two outcomes are highly possible: (1) a greater sense of bonding will take place between the students and the teacher and (2) students will find their initial exposure to the library less frustrating, and, consequently, they will be more willing to use the library. Further, I suggest that research papers will be of a better quality and one problem with plagiarism, the frustration that breeds procrastination and an unwillingness to do the research necessary to support one's thesis, will be minimized. Also, I speculate that bonding may make it more difficult for students to 'betray' the confidence a concerned teacher has in them.

II. Paraphrasing

Probably the biggest contributing problem to plagiarism, though, is the way we teach paraphrasing. Let me be frank. I believe that paraphrasing serves a very limited purpose, and there is undue emphasis on paraphrasing. In my own research, I cannot think of one time when I have paraphrased a passage, and I have done an informal survey of a few scholars I know by asking them about the issue of paraphrasing. They don't paraphrase either. What is the use of paraphrasing anyway?

The standard teaching about why one should paraphrase is, "You paraphrase if you want to use the idea but don't like the way the idea is expressed." This seems to me quite inane. How does one separate the idea from the language used to express the idea? Another reason students are advised to paraphrase is because teachers don't want to see a paper that is one mass of quotations, and paraphrased passages seem to demonstrate that the student has done some synthesis and thereby attempted to grapple with the concepts the paper has dealt with. But this rarely happens when students paraphrase. Instead, a passage is reshuffled and some words are switched here and there. The following example from a student paper I recently received exemplifies this shuffling technique:

ORIGINAL: "Acid precipitation is apparently caused largely by sulfur dioxide emissions from coal-burning power plants, smelters and factories. To a lesser extent, nitrogen oxides from car exhausts and industry contribute to the problem." (Time, March 17, 1980, p. 88)

STUDENT PARAPHRASE: "Apparently, acid precipitation is caused mostly by sulfur emissions from coal-burning power plants, smelters [sic] factories, and to a lesser extent by nitrogen oxides from car exhausts and industry contributions."

The student paraphrase was not documented, but the article was cited in the student's bibliography. I want to speak about the bibliography momentarily, but let me first suggest that this type of paraphrase is the direct result of teaching that paraphrasing is a matter of getting the essential idea by using different words. In this example, the student translated that rather abstract notion of paraphrasing into a concrete rule: shift the words around and maintain the essential meaning. However, this particular student merely used this rule in a mechanical way. Therefore, the words were shifted around alright, but the meaning was changed! Of course, one could question the use of my example as a prototype of students' understanding of paraphrasing, but I suggest that my example is not a unique species of an exotic variety of homo communicatus. It is, rather, a very real case that represents a variety of other cases where students labor under a false notion of paraphrasing. And that notion has been handed to them by English teachers. I want to recommend, therefore, that we cease teaching students how to paraphrase because it is not very useful and it really causes more problems than it solves. Rather, I believe we ought to teach students to synthesize their research findings. Now what do I mean by this?

Certainly, paraphrasing is considered a type of synthesis, but I contend that it does not work that way when students use it. It may be used as an intermediate step in teaching synthesis, but even then, paraphrasing only shows that a student has been able to understand a piece of data and translate it into other terms that should be more or less synonymous with the original language of the mother article. Synthesis, however, requires that a student either makes an observation about the material--challenges its validity, expands upon the point made, shows why the point has validity, etc.--or links it to other research. After all, this is the function of research: to construct data in such a way that a new observation about the relationships between two or more pieces of data can be seen. Therefore, the student should be taught to make these types of written statement about research.

Now this is an extremely creative task and it requires more than passing familiarity with the research process and the actual material garnered from that process. But if students do not see the relationship between various bits and pieces of research, they really cannot be said to be able to write a research paper of much merit. So, it is the teacher's task to teach synthesis, and I believe this task will be best accomplished by deferring the teaching of paraphrasing. I would go so far as to suggest that students should be told that any attempts at paraphrasing will be given little consideration when their papers are evaluated.

III. Bibliography

Lastly, I want to question the validity of a bibliography. The common reasons for having a bibliography as part of the research paper are that it (1) shows how much research the writer did and (2) lists any research that the writer used whose ideas might be in the paper in some obtuse fashion. But I wonder, does it really matter how much research the student did? The amount of research is, in one sense, quite unimportant. What matters is the amount of research actually used in the final paper, and the bibliography is merely a formality for most students and teachers, unless we are evaluating a student on the amount of research done, regardless of the amount of research in the final paper. This seems to me a quaint idea. But the second notion used to justify a bibliography is more dangerous, it seems to me, because it suggests that we are unconsciously going to assimilate ideas that can be directly traced to some piece of research that we have read. True, we do begin to get a clearer idea of what we want to say about the research as we read more data on a given topic, and this is often subtle, but I question the need to have students list references that are not obviously pertinent to their final report. And here I am objecting to a philosophical consideration that is indefensible and tends to give students the misconception that research is a somewhat mystical experience. Teachers need to clarify the research process and anything that hinders this clarification seems to me a candidate for careful scrutiny and possible exclusion. Therefore, I seriously question the validity of asking students to submit a bibliography as part of their research efforts.

My proposals may seem radical, and I must admit they are a bit unconventional, but my concern is to teach students how to do research so that it will be helpful to them. My focus has been on the particular problem of plagiarism because (1) plagiarism is quite prevalent, if my experiences with students can be taken as an indication of more reliable statistics and data, and (2) our purpose as teachers of the research paper (and the research paper is one of our staples as teachers) is to teach students skills that have a high value of transference in the world outside the classroom. Further, we should teach these skills so that the creative aspect of research is apparent. In my opinion, teaching the use of the library by actually doing research with students, emphasizing synthesis, not paraphrasing, and considering the elimination of a bibliography for student papers is a very effective way to deter the types of plagiarism that can be attributed to instruction on the research paper. It may even encourage students who might otherwise practice professional plagiarism to develop those skills that are in demand in the world outside the classroom. And, if we can make an inference from the rampant use of professional plagiarism, it seems that the writing and research skills needed in the world outside the classroom are at a premium because of the laws of supply and demand. This should be an incentive for those students who want to be successful in the classroom and outside of it.

NCTE CONVENTION

AT THE 1983 CONVENTION OF NCTE IN DENVER, NOVEMBER 18-23, GUEST SPEAKERS FOR MAJOR SESSIONS WILL DISCUSS ASPECTS OF THE CONVENTION THEME, "QUALITY FOR ALL."

MORTIMER ADLER WILL ADDRESS THE OPENING SESSION. HE IS PRINCIPAL AUTHOR OF *THE PAIDEIA PROPOSAL* FOR A NEW, STRONGLY ACADEMIC CURRICULUM FOR ALL STUDENTS IN U.S. ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS.

AMONG OTHERS, COMPUTER SCIENTIST JOSEPH WEIZENBAUM, NOVELIST RUDOLFO ANAYA, TEACHER OF THE YEAR LEROY HAY, WRITING SPECIALIST MILES MYERS, CHILDREN'S AUTHORS JANE YOLEN AND LOIS DUNCAN WILL SPEAK.

PANEL DISCUSSIONS ON CURRENT ISSUES IN EDUCATION WILL FEATURE "USING LANGUAGE TO LEARN: LANGUAGE ACROSS THE CURRICULUM," "COMPUTERS IN THE ENGLISH CLASSROOM--YES OR NO?" AND A CONVERSATION WITH EDITORS OF A NUMBER OF JOURNALS ON THE TEACHING OF WRITING.

DECLARING WRITING INDEPENDENCE

Jim Christ

As language arts teachers, we belong to a unique class of individuals. We are the ones who are perceived as priests of "correctitude" by our fellow humans (Lloyd-Jones, 1979). Our students look almost shocked when they learn we are anything else. If we coach basketball, at least we can point out that John Wooden, possibly the finest basketball coach ever, was an English teacher, but many students do not even know his name any more. We are the ones who sit down at a kitchen table to ingest mass quantities of student compositions, often conscious that we are checking the name on each so that we can space out the ones written by those who might not have needed us at all. Those clear, lucid papers keep us going through the rest. We are the ones conspicuously not mentioned by Education Secretary T. H. Bell when he suggested that it is vital for some teachers to be paid more to keep them in the classroom (Arizona Daily Star, May 13, 1982).

We share many qualities, and not all of them are discouraging. We love to make a student think. We treasure the praise we get, from students or parents, but most of it comes a few years later and it is tinged with something else. It is then that we feel a wave of rapturous "it's worth it," say a thank you, and recall Johnny. Usually, he was an able student when he came into our class, and we remember some trait in his writing. He was careful enough, and we tried to help him become more expansive, or he had good ideas and we worked with him on organization or sentence variety. We are happy that we helped him, wondering all the while if we can take credit, and, ultimately wondering if his twenty-five or thirty classmates are faring well. The "something else," we realize, is that perhaps Johnny's peers are not writing well enough to suit their history teachers or their new English teachers.

Perhaps we've learned a great deal about the writing process lately, but most of the rest of the world, we realize, is still concerned only with the written product. And so we share a fear too, or at least an unsettled felling, that perhaps our students will not next year contact teachers who employ pre-writing activities, who believe their students have something to say, who believe that

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editing is a sub-process to go through only after the ideas are organized. It would appear that influencing the writing processes of our students is not enough. We, after all, will not be there next year.

One day I was conversing with a colleague--a special education teacher. I was expressing my sympathies for him in his job. What kind of success did he ever have? His response contained what is really the "bottom line" for us English teachers. "I know I've succeeded," he said, "when they don't need me anymore." However else we improve our students, let us promote as much as possible their writing independence.

The task has huge proportions, and my purpose in this piece is not to present some oversimplified technique that will work for all of us with each student, but rather to suggest where we might focus our attention so that most of our students will have the best chance to survive the writing experience without us in their future schooling and employment.

If we are to be effective composition teachers, we must not only employ a large number of pre-writing and motivational activities, but also lead each of our students to discover why we do so. As soon as our students realize the relationship between their own pre-writing and the quality of their written product, we will have our best chance to wean them from our protection. For one of my most recent assignments, an eighth grade student produced the best piece he had written during the year and a half I had worked with him. His misspelling and handwriting were distracting, but he had succeeded in providing specific detail to each of his generalizations. At the time I read it, I congratulated myself for a lesson decent enough to reach at least him, and when I returned his paper, I congratulated him for his achievement. And yet I knew that the most important part of his learning was still in doubt. Would he understand that the great improvement he had shown was the direct result of his own thinking and experience? Would he begin using pre-writing strategies on his own? His next piece, for which I had not encouraged as much pre-writing, was very weak and overgeneralized. At our next conference, I hope to be able to make him see two things for himself: that his two papers have a wide difference in quality, and that the probable reason for the difference was the difference in the pre-writing work which he had done. He will be a more independent writer when he "knows that it all goes back to the beginning of the writing process. What you have to say decides the words you use to say it" (Murray, p. 12).

Maxine Hairston has suggested, with a term borrowed from Thomas Kuhn, that the teaching of composition is undergoing a "paradigm shift" (Hairston, p. 76). The number of process-oriented language arts classrooms is growing. But at least until the new paradigm has become prominent it must be one of our chief concerns to bring each student to develop and use his own pre-writing strategies. Therefore we must first give our students a variety of pre-writing activities so that they are able to explore each and determine which ones are best for them, and we must then show that such experiencing and discovering and choosing of form and detail is an inseparable part of the writing process.

Variety is simple. I do not mean to say that employing a strategy and making it effective for a student is easy, but certainly finding possibilities is. We have only to attend a few conferences, stay reasonably current on journal-reading, and share ideas in the teachers' lounge instead of complaining about all the fragments in Johnny's paper. The difficulty is making someone else's idea work when it is presented by each of us and for each of our students. In the introduction to their fine resource book, Strategies for Teaching the Composition Process, Koch and Brazil acknowledge this: ". . . we know that teachers must construct their courses according to their own goals and objectives. Therefore, strategies are to be selected to fit individual class needs" (Koch and Brazil, p. ix). Sometimes what worked well for someone else will only work for us after we make some modifications, and sometimes another teacher's techniques are not suited to us or our students at all. This is what makes us effective teachers after all--recognizing the needs of our students and trying to meet those needs.

For one of my seventh grade classes, I recently attempted to use an idea which I had borrowed from another English teacher. The idea was to employ a ten-minute free writing in class and then to have students use the ideas generated to produce a more formal composition to turn in. The advantages were fairly clear, I thought. Students would be led to discover that they had something to say, they would have a few key ideas with which to begin, and students who generally have trouble starting an assignment would have already made a start. The result was a failure. Most of my students had simply carried their free writing home, tossed in a couple of punctuation marks, and recopied the formless mass in ink. I resisted the urge to phone my colleague and inform him his idea was either tremendously stupid or an outstanding practical joke. Instead, I tried it again. His goal had simply been to demonstrate to lower-level students that they had something within their experience that was worth writing about; my purpose was to compel students to extract and develop major ideas from a relatively random sample of thinking and writing. The next time I employed the activity, I devoted more time to it. I performed the same task with my students, and I encouraged students to criticize my work. Which of my ideas were worth developing, and which were not? Which details belonged with those ideas? The students paired off and went through the same process with each other. Each student transformed his free-writing into a list of related ideas and details, no sentences allowed. I collected the free writing so that they would only have lists with which to work. Success. Not only did my students produce more organized compositions, but in fact in many cases actually expanded the lists begun in class before sitting down to draft a paper to turn in.

Although there is probably no perfect English teacher, there are among us some very good ones, and I would submit that they are the ones most open to trying new strategies and most able to modify those strategies in accord with the needs of their own students.

Bringing our students to understand that their written products are inextricably linked to their pre-writing is not easy, but it is necessary if students are to gain some degree of independent writing skill. When students realize that their directed thinking and note taking are not just something to do in order to get ready to write, they will see that pre-writing is writing, a sub-process which cannot be separated from arriving at a product. When a teacher makes it obvious to students that pre-writing is emphasized because it helps the writer prepare a better product, the students are more likely to carry this value out of the room to employ elsewhere, both immediately and in the future.

One way to demonstrate the necessity for self-directed pre-writing is to use questions in conferences and class discussion which lead students to this conclusion. One thing I wish I had done to follow up the seventh grade "free writing as pre-writing" activities mentioned above is a discussion of the qualitative differences in the two assignments and reasons for the differences. Out of this discussion would surely have come an awareness in some of my students that they had a more real audience the second time we performed the activity. They might even have begun to sense the sorts of questions readers ask. In fact, such discussion may be one of our most effective approaches to revision. When we help students revise, we are asking them to make major changes or additions. When we ask them to be more specific or to rearrange ideas or to find ways of making logical transitions, we are, in some ways, asking students to return to pre-writing. We direct student thinking toward generating other details or toward understanding the relationships of concepts about which they are verbalizing.

A second valid way of getting students to see the importance of pre-writing is quite simply to tell them. It is true that students learn most permanently through discovery, but some students will not necessarily discover the conclusion they most need to reach. For example, a student may think his product has improved, not because he thought out, listed, and organized, but because the assignment was easier, or even because he bought a new pen which made his handwriting look neater. It is something like learning to shoot a basketball. When most youngsters begin playing basketball, they are not strong enough to shoot the ball through a hoop which is ten feet off the ground. What they discover is that throwing the ball gets it high enough, and sometimes even gets it through the goal. They conclude that shooting is throwing. Usually their first basketball coach has to spend a good deal of time trying to "unteach" this idea because the faulty conclusion still brings the desired result occasionally. And very often the coach will simply tell a player that he has little chance to improve until he changes his shooting style. Telling can be part of valid teaching. The key is to follow up with a good deal of encouragement. The basketball coach says "good job" or "that's right" when his player attempts to start shooting instead of throwing, even when the result is a missed basket in a close and important game. Composition teachers should likewise reward the attempts of their students to employ independent pre-writing strategies, even when the products have many surface errors such as the utterly obnoxious run-on sentence.

Some observable ways of forcing students to see the value of pre-writing are within the structure of the class itself. If a teacher models the writing process, for example, students will see that it is not just they who depend on pre-writing to develop an idea. We can do this on paper or on a blackboard in plain sight. The main thing is that students understand that we too must struggle and generate ideas before we sit down and dash off a few hundred words. ". . . when the students have seen a few demonstrations, not of the reading or criticizing of communications, but of the process of communicating by means of writing, they are at least prepared to understand that there are techniques of clarity" (Johnson, pp. 105-106). Regardless of our description of the writing process (i.e. model), it is clear that it is easier to assist novice writers while they are in the pre-writing stage than in any other. We cannot teach students to think by telling them what they did wrong in a completed composition, especially if we focus primarily on surface distractors such as misspellings and errors in usage. It is while a student engages in pre-writing that (s)he must begin forming an idea of audience that will dictate much of her style and diction, and as long ago as the 1950's we were cautioned to emphasize "writing-about-something-for-someone" rather than "writing" (Johnson, p. 109). Even when we help our students to revise, what we are doing is assisting them to see how well they have met their own writing goals and perhaps bringing them back to another pre-writing task. Students can also see to what extent we value pre-writing by virtue of the amount of class time we are willing to devote to it. When we are willing to de-emphasize surface errors in usage, and isolated grammar and spelling lessons, students will probably begin to believe that we do value ideas, and the public may slowly begin to alter its view of us as mere "correctors" of English usage. Using class time for pre-writing activities also gives us the advantage of being able to assist students in defining and clarifying their idea before they leave class with directions which they do not understand.

As we select and prepare activities for use with novice writers, let us use as one of our criteria, the idea that writing should be pleasurable. Please do not misunderstand me in this--I do not think learning has to be "fun." Quite frankly I don't care how much "fun" a student has while learning, so long as learning takes place. On the other hand, one of the reasons that novice writers continue to be novice writers is that they hate writing. For such students, we should try to select pre-writing activities which they might enjoy. These often include group discussions or other types of peer involvement. Yet I believe that our thrust here ought to be in making the writing sub-process (when a student is putting his ideas into organized form on paper) as pleasurable (painless) as possible. When the novice writer arrives at the lonely part of her writing project with blank paper and a pen, I want her also to have a list of ideas and the knowledge that communicating her ideas is not going to be so hard because she does have ideas. Good pre-writing activities are motivators, and they should make it easier for students to complete their writing tasks.

The varied ways in which we can help our students realize writing independence are too numerous to discuss fully here, but as a final point, I would like to urge us to make it perceivable to our students that pre-writing strategies are of immediate value outside our own classrooms. We might want to start by having students perform pre-writing of some kind for an assignment in another class. We might even enlist help and suggestions from the teacher of that class. (After all, the history teacher probably also checks the names as he reads student work on some of his assignments, just so he can space out the most lucid ones and keep himself going). If we are successful in getting students to write better science and history papers, we may even be able to convince those teachers to provide more opportunities to write. These students can see the immediate uses of pre-writing strategies, they learn more thoroughly, and we are meanwhile promoting writing throughout the curriculum. After all, not too many employers and not too many teachers outside of English ever ask people to write about their summer vacation. The most valid writing is done about subjects which are most valid to our students. "One cannot write writing any more than one can read reading. One can only write, just as one can only read, history or geography, or physiology, or some other subject about which writing can be done (Johnson, p. 101).

No, we will probably not be there to help Johnny and his thirty classmates next year, but we can help them not to need us any more. And perhaps then, or even sooner, they will depend on their own pre-writing instead of us.

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ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS CURRICULUM GUIDES

A new edition of Recommended English Language Arts Curriculum Guides, K-12 is now available from the ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills and NCTE. This annual publication, designed to aid planners of elementary and secondary school curricula, reviews selected guides from state education departments and local school districts across the U.S. Editor Imogene Springer comments that the guides chosen for review each year represent some of the best current thinking on curriculum for English and thus are considered worth the attention of other curriculum planners.

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CONFESSIONS OF A FIRST QUARTER TUTOR

Kenneth C. Wilk

"O,K., who needs a conference?" Squeaking pencils and contemplating gazes signal another day in the writing lab. Tutoring English A students (students who did not score high enough on the English Placement Test to qualify for English 1, the general education requirement at CSUHumboldt) one-on-one presents a unique opportunity to teach strategies that work for all types of writing. Although these students are at first reluctant to discuss their writing, the tutor must build a rapport which inspires beginning writers with enough confidence to examine their work critically.

This rapport starts with the tutor's understanding that these people are individuals with differing temperaments, tolerances, and abilities. A tutor's repertoire includes everything from coddling to butt-kicking; some beginning writers just need some positive reinforcement (which can be provided by pointing out good qualities in their writing) whereas others must understand that lab time will be valuable only if they are prepared to work hard. I have found that periodically sitting and writing with students demonstrates that I can practice what I teach; the students feel that I do what I'm talking about. Reading also helps; I read them James Stephens' "The Story of a Good Dog," pointing out how treating a typical subject untypically can work as a successful writing strategy. Rapport builds block by block; unless the foundations are solid blocks of trust, friendship, respect, and work ethic, then these beginning writers will not trust me to help them improve their ability to express deep personal ideas and feelings without danger or ridicule or rejection.

As the rapport builds, so does their confidence. The first time I talk to a student, I always explain two important concepts. First, writing is hard work and you get better, like anything else, by doing. Second, my role as a tutor is to offer suggestions as advice, not Gospel Truth. No matter how qualified I may be, the final decisions always remain with the writer. The writer should listen to criticism with an open mind, picking out pertinent details and rejecting the rest. If the writer is uncertain about some

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of the advice, then experimentation or a second opinion will be valuable.

When I notice someone wedged between an idea and a hard place, I sit down and we chat. Usually they are stuck before or during a rough (first) draft. Beginning writers often want to slide by with one draft, and consequently they want to get it right the first time. I patiently explain that all competent writers understand the need for revision. The rough draft is exactly that, rough. Instead of trying to create perfect ideas, examples, and organization the first time, the writer should use the rough draft to generate material. Subsequent drafts will mold, shape, and craft these rough ideas. We discuss their topic and ideas; then I offer suggestions about possible starting points and places where examples might help.

Once they bring me their rough draft, the real fun begins. Nobody wants to be told that they aren't William Faulkner, yet everyone wants to improve their work. The first thing I ask them is: "What do you think about this piece?" After hem-hawing a bit, most will come up with significant ideas about their writing such as "I really like my dog example" or "I don't think I say what I want to here." Teachers like Jerry Herman ("The Tutor and the Writing Student: A Case Study", Bay Area Writing Project Curriculum Publication No. 6 [ED 192 324], p. 55) and Thomas A. Carnicelli ("The Writing Conference: A One-to-One Conversation", Eight Approaches to Teaching Composition, Donovan and McClelland, Eds. Urbana, Illinois, 1980) advocate continuing this "questioning" method, thereby allowing the student to choose the course that revision will take. I use this technique but also suggest ideas and examples that would enhance the work. I explain, however, that my job is not to write the paper for them. I provide them options to choose from and examples to emulate.

For instance, if a student writes: "I drove like a bat out of hell," I ask him/her to examine the cliché and come up with a better one. If s/he is stumped, I would say: "How about, 'I drove like Mario Andretti at Indianapolis' or 'I drove like a hurricane wind'." Then I would tell them to try one of their own. Or if the person writes "This is my favorite spot because it is so beautiful and serene," I would ask them to pick an image that would show me the beauty and create a mood that would make me feel serene. Again, if the writer cannot come up with one on his/her own, my example might be: "The river meandered slowly through the tall redwood trees and the constant, changing sound of water pouring over rocks calmed my ears, making me feel at peace in my favorite spot."

Usually the writer's first draft contains many good ideas, often too many for the scope of the paper. The first thing I look for is focus. Together we look at the assignment for guidelines and then we discuss how the writer can limit the paper by narrowing the focus. I ask the writer what ideas s/he really wants to discuss and then we talk about how these ideas can be expanded and organized.

Often writers have a "distance" problem. If they are not interested in the subject, then they are too far away and the writing is boring. I try to get these writers to look more closely at the subject and find what really interests them about it. For instance, one woman wrote three paragraphs about her mother; she was to choose one and expand it into a short essay. We agreed that one paragraph stood out, mutually deciding that something about her mother's appearance disturbed her. Once she understood what her most potent feelings were, she could passionately describe her mother's physical appearance and how and why it bothered her.

Other writers are too close to a personal experience, and although the writing is more powerful, somehow it doesn't work for readers. One woman wrote a moving piece about the death of a close friend. Yet the closeness of their relationship, one that took years to evolve, was introduced in a "writer-based" prose. Because the writer knew how close they were, she assumed that the reader would understand their tight relationship. I suggested a third person narrative, an outside observer who would notice the way that these two women touched, spoke,and interacted. The outsider forces the writer to look at the relationship in a new light which may suggest the need for vivid images and concrete examples, showing how close the relationship and how traumatizing the death. Removing or distancing from a personal incident often helps a writer understand what moved him/her about the episode; once a writer understands why one memory stands out from another, s/he can start to emphasize certain details to build suspense and catharsis.

I tell my charges that two more drafts should do it; I believe that three drafts are adequate and not unreasonable. The second draft condenses the ideas and organizes the paper, while the third cleans up any awkward passage or dangling ideas. My advice on second drafts is specific and limited; I do not expect these students to create the perfect essay or to revise a work as Dylan Thomas might.

I save grammar discussion for glaring, recurring problems or until students ask for specific help. I tell them that I will proof-read their final draft after they have already carefully edited. We go over the final version together, and I point out grammatical, spelling, and punctuation problems. We discuss anything that either of us deems important. I do not write the paper for them, but I always ask someone to proof-read any paper I turn in, and professional writers have editors or copy-readers to assist them, so why shouldn't these writers have the same service available?

The most important advice I give these writers is to experiment; I tell them to take chances and not to be afraid of failure, that most assignment guidelines are not rigid but flexible. There should be no penalty for experimentation; these beginning writers need to flex their writing muscles. These muscles can only be strong when writers write boldly and innovatively about their passions, their hopes, and their fears. Our writers improve because we offer them a framework that gives guidelines, with space within those guidelines to be individuals. Writing as an original, artistic mode of expression becomes possible through hard work and a cooperative effort, not between student and tutor but between writer and advisor.

UNLESS STUDENTS WORK WITH IDEAS, THEY WON'T LEARN TO THINK

The authors of THE WRITER'S MIND: WRITING AS A MODE OF THINKING discuss the importance of sustained writing, linked to solid reading, for developing students' ability to analyze and synthesize ideas, and make the public aware that the act of shaping thought _in writing_ makes possible the elaboration of ideas, the establishing of relationships among those ideas, and the consequent manipulations of those relationships that we associate with complex thought. "We do not genuinely 'know' a subject until we have written about it."

Stressing the "connections and interdependencies between writing and cognition," the authors offer perspectives on "nearly every aspect of the mental activities that inform expository writing."

Among the contributors are Ann E. Berthoff, Kenneth A. Bruffee, Hugh Burns, Richard L. Larson, Donald McQuade, Lee Odell, Sondra Perl, and Marilyn S. Sternglass. All of them note that everyone concerned with writing must strive to avoid narrow and reductionist conceptions of how it should be taught.

THE WRITER'S MIND: WRITING AS A MODE OF THINKING, edited by Janice N. Hayes, et. al. 256 pages, paperbound. Price: $13.50; NCTE members, $11.95. ISBN: 0-8141-5866-8. LC: 83-13223. Available from NCTE, 1111 Kenyon Rd., Urbana, IL 61801.

REDEEMING REVISION

Lee Ann Leeson

Pre-writing . . . Composing . . . Revision . . . Editing . . . Pre-writing . . . Composing . . . Revision . . . Editing . . . Pre-writing . . . Composing . . . Revision . . . Editing . . . Chant it to yourself. The litany of the composing process. It has a soothing sound. You can hear it rising from within the cloud of smog that often envelops our inner city school. And for the most part, the practice of English teachers in my department has been guided by the preaching of the litany. These are skilled, experienced teachers who know pre-writing strategies that can get the most reluctant basic writers excited about writing. The students in their classes compose daily; the English workroom is awash with papers. And editing? Why Warren was doing peer group editing even before "peer groups" were invented. But what about revision? Here was a problem. Our faith was strong but our practice faltered. To teach revision we relied heavily on admonition and exhortation. We preached the importance of revision. We directed students to turn in rough drafts along with final copies, and we gave them opportunities to revise papers that had received low grades. But to little avail, for we discovered as we read these successive drafts that they were, sadly, not really better but only neater.

After years of struggling with the revision problem, I went up to the university where I learned and practiced some methods for teaching as well as preaching revision. When I returned to my high school, I brought the good word back to my colleagues. But they were skeptical. Could practices devised in the ivory tower have any efficacy in humble classrooms beneath the cloud of smog? They could and did. The greatest test of faith for me was a composition class of thirty-eight seniors whose reading abilities ranged from college levels to grade 5.0 and whose attitudes toward writing generally placed somewhere on a scale between resignation and disgust. Most of these seniors did learn to use revision as a tool to develop successive drafts of most of the compositions they wrote in my class. These successive drafts were generally judged by me, by associates I shared papers with, by student readers, and by the writers themselves to be not just neater, but better pieces of writing. By the end of the semester, the class was asking rou-

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tinely on every assignment, "Do we get to write another draft of this paper?" and patiently explaining to me the benefits of more time spent on revision.

How to bring this about? The first step for me was some thinking about what revision means and what I wanted students to do. Revision is not, of course, just rewriting; it is, as well, rethinking an argument, an explanation, a story. I write a draft or part of a draft. I reread what I have written and I think, What am I trying to do here? What point am I trying to make? How is my reader likely to respond? What's worth saving? What should I throw away? What do I need to add, change, or rearrange? I am not interested in just making changes in the surface of my text so that it looks and sounds better. The most interesting part of writing for me is figuring out exactly what I know and trying to tell you about it. This is what I want for students. What I do not want to consider as finished writing: their first responses dumped out on paper--their undigested opinions on gun control, their canned reactions to a short story or poem, their underdeveloped accounts of a personal experience.

In order to get beyond that first reaction, I recommend abandoning exhortation and admonition and, at least temporarily, adopting a more authoritarian stance. When we begin a writing project, I explain that all students will write at least three drafts of this paper. This is not optional, something students should do or may do. This, also, is not something reserved for students who don't "get it right" the first time. Each student is required to write three drafts. These drafts may not be just progressively neater copies of each other. Each succeeding draft must be substantially revised. The writer should be able to point out changes she has made; the reader should be able to identify these changes when she reads two or three drafts side by side.

This is, of course, setting up a somewhat artificial framework for revision. Most writers do not, in fact, write a draft straight through and then go back and rewrite a second draft, and then a third. Writing and rewriting go on continuously in any draft or any number of drafts until the writer feels the piece is "good enough" or until some outside deadline forces him to abandon his project. In practice, this is also what happens to papers students write in my classes, but in order to get this kind of writing-rewriting going it is necessary to outline some process that refuses to allow students to abandon their baby compositions before thay have a chance to grow a bit.

Naturally, merely forcing students to write more than one draft of a paper is only a beginning. The key, I think, to making this process work is really two activities that go on simultaneously in the writing class--one is responding to each draft of the student's writing--the second is suggesting, pointing out, modeling revision strategies a student might experiment with. Students need to try out their writing on readers, and they also need to see the techniques other writers use. If students are to substantially rewrite successive drafts they need some sort of feedback and input between drafts one and two, and between drafts two and three.

Ideally, perhaps, each draft of a student's paper would be discussed thoroughly by teacher and student in an individual conference--rather difficult in a class of thirty-eight students, though, in fact, I do hold a great many short conferences with students while the class is writing, reading, or working in small groups. I also rely on students to be reader-responders for their own papers and for those of other students.

Students respond to their own writing and share their responses with me by writing me a letter in which they tell me how they have gone about writing the assignment so far, how much time they have spent on it, what problems they have run into, what they like about what they have written, what plans they have for future drafts, etc. When students know that they are going to revise, when they know they will have a chance to make changes before their papers are evaluated, they are often much more willing to admit to problems they are having. When they are not defending their papers for a final grade, they can point out with uncanny accuracy exactly those problems in a paper that you might identify, and they can make quite reasonable plans about what to do next. In this case, they only response they need from the teacher is, "Fine. Go ahead."

After students have assessed a piece of writing for themselves, they read and discuss other writer's drafts in small groups. To focus the group's efforts, I point out certain things I would like them to do. These generally are variations on a few basic procedures suggested in numerous discussions of peer teaching. First, summarize briefly the story the writer is telling, the arguments he is making, the main points in his explanation, etc. Second, identify ideas, techniques, specific passages in the paper that seem to work well. Third, suggest changes or additions the writer might make in revising his paper. When groups meet again for the second or third draft of the same paper, I also ask questions that lead students to identify revisions the writer has made and discuss how these revisions change the effect of the paper.

Groups often select one or two papers to share with the whole class and we discuss these again pointing out, suggesting ways the writer might go about revising the paper. At the beginning of the semester, I also bring in xerox copies of successive drafts of extensively revised, very good student papers. I use these to model with the whole class the processes I want students to use in groups and to further demonstrate that writing and rewriting is a normal part of "good writing" and not just a punishment for "bad writers." As a whole class, we list on the board effective strategies various writers in the class and in the xeroxed examples have used. These are possibilities, not rules to follow. Some seem quite simple; others are more sophisticated. Some are global strategies; others address specific writing problems. In a class of basic writers or on an early assignment, we might keep the list very short. As the semester goes on, more and more strategies suggest themselves.

- Find the most important point in your paper and write more about it.
- Cross out your "introductory" paragraph and get right into your argument.
- Divide the paper into paragraphs.
- Add some dialogue.
- List the main points in your paper. Reorganize them in a "logical" order.
- Begin with a personal anecdote.
- Interview an "expert" to get more information.
- Use some specific sensory detail.
- Quote lines from the poem to support your opinion.
- Respond to questions the reader is likely to ask.

I generally collect drafts and the "letters" students have written and skim through them quickly--and I mean very quickly--say fifteen minutes for a whole set. This isn't difficult because I have seen many of the papers as students were writing in class or working in small groups. I pull out papers with serious problems to discuss individually with the writers. I check additional examples I want to either xerox or read aloud and discuss. I quickly jot down general problems or strengths to add to our list on the board.

When drafts are returned the next day, students are directed to revise, selecting from the strategies listed on the board those that seem suitable to their purpose, audience, or their own intentions for a particular piece of writing. The suggestions listed on the board are, of course, in many cases textbook procedures that the teacher could have introduced at the beginning of a writing project, but I find students pay closer attention to instruction offered between drafts when they themselves have a sense of the problems involved in a piece of writing and when, as a class, they have already generated a number of possible, at least partially successful, solutions.

I try to keep clear in my own mind and to dramatize to students in conferences and in class discussions that the "strategies" listed on the board are in some ways only tricks and gimmicks. They are techniques a writer can experiment with, a partial answer to "What am I supposed to do?" But they only make sense if they fit in with what the writer knows, is figuring out, is trying to say about her subject. In conferences, in class discussions, and in groups we try to make these general "strategies" specific to the individual writer's concerns. So we do not merely direct the writer to "add sensory details," but we want to know, "What does it feel like to run wind sprints during football practice on a hot afternoon in August?" We ask the writer not just to arrange his arguments in "logical" order, but to think, "Why did you put argument X before argument Y? How does X relate to Z?"

In the kind of workshop classroom I've been describing most student writers can learn to use to their advantage the revision process suggested in the pre-writing . . . composing . . . revision . . . editing model of composition. Even unskilled, basic writers can in successive drafts move from scribbled paragraphs to longer, more fully developed, more logically reasoned pieces of writing. The final drafts of these essays still often have many inconsistencies and errors, but as students figure out what they want to say and work on communicating what they know to an audience, much of their most garbled prose becomes clearer. Writing and rewriting is most helpful for these students. They don't have to get it all "right" the first time. They don't have to crumple up the paper and throw it away every time they make a mistake. It is often a relief for them to learn that "real" writers continually mess up their papers and that producing real writing is often difficult and time-consuming, not just for them but for all serious writers.

Let me address two or three practical concerns connected with making revision an important focus of the writing class. First, I find that aiming toward three or more drafts of a paper works better than requiring only two. On the second draft of three the writer can really be daring--perhaps, with the teacher's support, take what is already a very fine first draft and try completely restructuring it or try going at the problem in a totally different way. Or throw away a really lousy first draft and just start over again. If the second draft is not so great, there is time to disucss why the changes aren't working and to try again. At least three drafts also help to postpone the problem of editing. Almost all students and many teachers still think revision means primarily editing. Especially on drafts one and two, I actively discourage students from going through their own or others' papers systematically hunting down errors in spelling, punctuation, or usage. In the first place, unskilled writers are not very good at this and often cause more errors than they correct. In the second, editing distracts students from more important concerns of figuring out what they are trying to say. And most importantly, it is extremely difficult to convince a student to cross out and rewrite a paragraph he has already very carefully corrected. Many errors do take care of themselves in successive drafts. I only explicitly direct students to edit their papers when I feel I absolutely cannot bully, cajole or entice them into making any other more major kinds of improvement. So only when the writer swears he has completely exhausted the resources of me, his group, and himself in writing and rewriting, thinking and rethinking, will I suggest that he get Fred to help him with his spelling or that he read his paper slowly out loud to himself and try to put in a few more periods.

It may sound like this procedure of writing three or more drafts could lead to spending a couple of weeks on the same composition. It does. Plan for it. Substantive revision takes time. If you had one night to revise a paper, how many major changes would you be willing to make, especially if you were studying for four other classes and playing basketball? I allow a lot of time for writing in class and space due dates for various drafts at least several days apart. Students produce fewer "finished" papers, but the quality of these papers is generally higher. Students write much more, but I grade fewer papers since only final drafts receive a letter grade evaluation.

At first I gave no credit at all for early drafts. However, I found that my students are not all motivated to write solely by their love of expressing themselves on paper or by their desire for self-improvement. Many inquire crassly of any class activity, "Will this count?" Since they are thus motivated by grades I decided to use this motivation rather than fight it. I now give points for everything; these points cost me nothing and gratify those students who enjoy racking up many points. A legible Draft #1 is due on a specific date and is worth X number of points. A completed, revised Draft #2 also receives points. These points reflect not the quality of the writing but only the fact that a satisfactory draft has been completed. At some stage a final copy of the paper and all previous drafts are turned in for a final evaluation. Like all composition teachers in schools where grades are given, I balance precariously between grades that I hope will motivate the student to continue writing, and those that I feel are a realistic evaluation of the quality of the student writer's work.

Pre-writing . . . Composing . . . Revision . . . Editing . . . As composition theorists these days are only too quick to point out, writing is a recursive process so the divisions between pre-writing, composing, revising, and editing blur when the writer is actually in the process of producing a finished piece of writing. Much of what we call revision in my classes might be thought of as new "composing" since the papers of student writers are so often underdeveloped and addition of whole new paragraphs and pages is a primary strategy. Many of my students' sketchy, disorganized first drafts might be more accurately identified as pre-writing. Editing of surface features goes on continuously as all writers stop occasionally to ask themselves, "How do you spell occasionally?" and "Do I need a question mark here?" Pre-writing . . . Composing . . . Revising . . . Editing. Chant it to yourself. To me, revision is that state of grace in which writing is still perfectable, in which the writer may see once more the vision that initially impelled his writing, in which his ideas may be born again. On a more earthly level, it is that point in the composing process when students think they are finished but you can see they are only getting started. Revision, writing and re-writing, is a useful, and probably on some level, an essential part of writing for all writers. It deserves more than just lip service in the composing process litany.

COMMISSION'S REPORT SUPPORTS NCTE's VIEW OF THE ESSENTIALS

A statement on aims for high school English programs heads the list of recommendations for improving secondary school curriculum announced by the National Commission for Excellence in Education April 26 and 27. It reads as follows:

> The teaching of English in high school should equip graduates to: (A) comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and use what they read; (B) write well-organized, effective papers; (C) listen effectively and discuss ideas intelligently; and (D) know our literary heritage, how it enhances imagination and ethical understanding, and how it relates to the customs, ideas, and values of today's life and culture.

"This is a recognition of the importance and priority of English in a student's education," said NCTE President William F. Irmscher of the University of Washington, Seattle.

THE PERSONAL FEATURE:
A PEERLESS PEER ASSIGNMENT

Terry O. Phelps

The world abounds with topics for composition, but few can simultaneously (1) interest a wide range of students, (2) provide practice in gathering, sifting, selecting, sorting and synthesizing information into a coherent piece, (3) provide for a variety of options in style and structure, (4) afford opportunities for socialization, (5) develop critical thinking, and (6) make grading papers enjoyable, worthwhile, and relatively easy.

Enter the Personal Feature, a twelve-step assignment which allows students to write about one of their favorite topics: peers. It is a fun assignment which accomplishes a myriad of objectives. Briefly, the steps involve interviews, class discussions, small group critique sessions, and revisions. Notice that each of these is plural. This is not an assignment which students can whip out in a couple of days, yet it can accomplish as much as or more than several short assignments.

The first step of the assignment should be prefaced by a discussion of reader interest, the point of the discussion being that writing for an audience is a waste of time if the audience is not interested. Like several steps in the assignment, the discussion of reader interest will reap greater benefits if it is done inductively. Begin by asking generally what makes reading interesting for the students, possibly getting them started by suggesting suspense and discussing it. Other interest generators that may arise from the discussion include novelty, surprise, drama, humor, empathy or identification with a subject, pathos, and enlightenment. If students don't come up with these on their own, prompt them by giving examples of various kinds of writing from which students can infer the source of interest. Emphasize the importance of reader interest as a major factor in evaluation of papers.

After this discussion, assign the first step of the personal feature, the interview. Tell students to pair off with someone besides best friends, with someone they

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would like to know more about. This may require a bit of maneuvering, especially if students are overly cliquish, but can usually be accomplished without much trouble. If there is an uneven number, one trio may be required, with the rest in pairs. Two students in the trio can interview in tandem, and the third student can choose either of the other two to interview.

Tell students that they are to interview each other extensively in preparation for a personal feature, somewhat like a magazine feature. In the course of interviewing, they are to find something interesting which can be developed into a paper of two or three pages (length may vary). Point out that they will need either to take notes or tape the interview, then let them begin.

Eventually, perhaps immediately, someone is going to ask, "What do I ask?" The question may come early because some students may have no idea how to begin an interview or what kinds of questions to ask. Or they may rough it, asking general questions in hopes of stumbling across something interesting. Ultimately, though, when asked what they have found interesting to write about, many students are going to come up empty handed, their reason likely being, "I didn't know what to ask." This, then, is a "teachable moment" when they are eager to find solutions to their predicament.

To solve their problem, begin by asking if anyone found any questions which yielded good information, and if so, what were they? To find other good questions, ask what kinds of things they might find interesting about each other. Hobbies, personal characteristics, trips, activities, goals and ambitions are likely to be some of the topics mentioned. Supplement whatever they suggest with other topics such as hardships, viewpoints, or philosophical ideas, unusual experiences, humorous or frightening experiences, disappointments, successes, and fears. Then ask, "What questions will enable us to find out about these things?" In other words, the topics themselves will suggest questions: What is your biggest disappointment? Have you won any awards? What do you want out of life? Have you ever had to overcome a really difficult obstacle? What is the funniest thing that ever happened to you? Have you ever come close to death?

Questions regarding viewpoints or philosophy will be more indirect. "What is your philosophy?" is not apt to elicit much from an adolescent. However, questions about a variety of issues can lead to inferences about one's philosophy: If you had your choice, would you take $1,000 per month for the next year? Do you believe that all good deeds will ultimately be rewarded? If you found a diamond ring in the school parking lot what would you do with it? Do you believe in the death penalty?

"Why?" and other questions can spring from answers to initial questions, leading to more specifics and possibly into totally different areas. Suggest to students that a good interviewer develops what journalists call a "nose for news," pursuing interesting angles that arise in the course of an interview. That is, advance questions simply get the ball rolling, and the interviewer should formulate other questions based on answers.

Armed with new questions, students are now ready for their second interview session. Give them class time with their interview partners again, moving among them to offer suggestions or answer questions. Tell them to write down every answer (in abbreviated form in some cases) because they'll never know when it might be useful. The result will be reams of information from which students will ultimately select their theses; moreover, they can support whatever generalizations they make with the specifics gleaned from the interviews. Be sure to allot enough time for sufficient interviewing to satisfy students.

Once the interviews are complete, tell each student to find an interesting point to make about the interviewee. This may be done in or out of class, but each person's point, once selected, will be discussed in class. That discussion may begin with each student telling the class his/her interesting point. After each point is presented, ask the class if they think it is indeed interesting. If so, encourage the student to develop that point (call it "thesis" if students are familiar with the term). If, on the other hand, a student's point is not deemed interesting, get that student to share other ideas with the class so that together they can arrive at a good point. Should this fail to produce a suitable point, suggest that the student do more interviewing, offering further questions to ask and asking the class to suggest other questions.

When all students have suitable points, tell them to develop their points into rough drafts of a couple of pages or so. Though they may have gathered considerable information by this time, their points may be based on a small portion of that information; consequently, they may not have much specificity for developing their points. This deficiency will surface quickly. Talk about it.

"I can't write two pages," a student may complain. "I don't even have enough for one page."

"What is the point you want to develop?" you ask.

"David plans to be President by the time he's 36."

"What information do you have to develop that idea?"

"He's planning on majoring in political science in college, then going to law school."

"What else?"

"That's about it."

"Would you say you need to get more information?"

"Yeah, but what about all this other stuff I got from interviewing?"

"That was general research to find the most interesting thing to write about. Some of it may relate to your point, but a lot may not. All of it, though, gives you a better understanding of David, which gives you insights that you might not have otherwise. Now you need to get information specifically about your point. For example, why does he want to be President? What made him decide on that goal instead of something else? What makes him think he will be a good President? What makes him think he can get elected? What other plans besides school does he have to help him reach his goal? You can get all kinds of relevant information. Incidentally, is David the only source of information?"

"What do you mean?"

"Could you ask other people about him and about his chances to be President? Would they vote for him? Could you ask his parents about it? Do they remember his being president of a neighborhood club, for instance, or did he collect campaign posters or pins, or things like that?"

The purpose of such dialogue is to point students in the direction of gathering more information, and, as the last part of the dialogue suggests, to apprise them of other sources besides the interviewee. Such a dialogue may be carried on privately with each student or with a few individuals in front of the class. The latter approach would take less time, and its success would depend upon the students' ability to transfer what they hear about another student's paper to their own.

The next step, obviously, is to give them time--in class and outside class--to get more information. Students may need further suggestions about what information to seek, and these suggestions may come from the teacher or the class. The more the class members help each other, the more they help themselves. This is one of the key factors determining the success of this entire assignment: students learn from each other, developing heuristics together which they can later employ individually, becoming more objectively critical as they evaluate each other's work, then transferring that objectivity to their own work. As students develop this ability to critique their own writing objectively and with purpose, they will need less and less supervision and direction from the teacher.

As students complete their first rough draft, its development occurring as a consequence of further information gathering, they should be less concerned about style, mechanics, and structure than about specificity. Those other considerations will be the focus of later critiquing. The emphasis at this stage should be on having something interesting to say, with enough information to develop it.

When students feel they have adequate information, divide them into small groups (three may be the optimum number) to critique each other's papers. Their instructions should be simply to read each rough draft in their group to determine (1) what the point is; (2) if the point is interesting; (3) if there is sufficient information included to develop the point and maintain interest; (4) if not, where is it lacking? Emphasize to the groups that they are not to be concerned about spelling, grammar, or anything besides content. Advise students that the purpose of the session is to help their peers improve their papers, so they should be diligent in their evaluation. Tell them to make their suggestions in writing and to keep the suggestions they get from each other. They will hand these in with all drafts when the paper is finally completed. While critiquing sessions are underway, be available for questions, but, apart from listening in to see that sutdents are on-task, keep intervention to a minimum.

After students have had ample time to evaluate and discuss their papers, direct them to the task of revising in light of the evaluations. If they question any of the criticisms, discuss these with them to determine their legitimacy. Once they are comfortable with their peers' suggestions, their task is to implement them in a second draft. In this draft they are to begin incorporating all they have learned previously about writing style and structure. If they have studied paragraphing, transitions, introductions, conclusions, diction and such, their papers should manifest that knowledge. On the other hand, this is an opportune time to introduce new writing conventions which, once understood, can be applied in the next draft. Provide time for at least two more small group critique sessions--one after this revision to evaluate stylistic and structural aspects of the paper, and another after the subsequent revision to "mop up" and proofread for mechanical problems such as spelling, grammar and usage. The purpose for delaying the critiquing of mechanics is twofold: to emphasize content (which is often stifled or subverted as students center on mechanics) and to save time. The latter results from not spending time to correct something (e.g. a misspelled word) which may not even be included in a later draft.

These last two critique sessions should take the same format as the earlier one. In small groups, students will read each others' papers, looking for specific problems as directed. Criticisms are to be written down and kept with all other drafts and materials to be turned in later.

After the final critique session, tell students to perform one last revision addressing the mechanics. Upon completion of this revision, direct them to submit all their work, including interviews, rough drafts and peer evaluations for a grade. The grade will be based on the entire process, not merely the finished product, evaluating how thorough the student was in each stage, i.e. gathering information, following revision suggestions and incorporating writing conventions studied in class.

In the course of writing the personal feature, the volume of writing will equal that of two or three papers, but the teacher has only one to grade. The experience in discovery and invention, together with the social experience of the small groups, will enhance student motivation not only for this assignment but for writing in general. And, because of the emphasis on making papers interesting, the teacher will be more motivated to grade them.

WINTER WORKSHOP FOR WRITING TEACHERS

The Conference on College Composition and Communication will add a new national meeting for college writing teachers to its schedule. CCCC and the National Council of Teachers of English will sponsor a three-day Winter Workshop on Teaching Composition to Undergraduates January 5-7, 1984, at the Sheraton Sand Key in Clearwater Beach Florida. The workshop will give teachers in two- and four-year colleges a chance for extended study of three important aspects of the teaching of college writing in the 1980's.

Computer applications to composition, basic writing for underprepared college students, and alternatives to traditional freshman English programs are the three subjects to be featured. Leaders for the three program strands are Hugh Burns, Air Force Academy; Andrea Lunsford, University of British Columbia; and Donald Murray, University of New Hampshire.

Enrollment for the Winter Workshop is limited to 150 persons. For details and registration materials, write Information Services, NCTE, 1111 Kenyon Rd., Urbana IL 61801

GROUP ESSAYS: THE TIME IS NOW

Suzanna Colby

The end of the semester approaching quickly, the seniors in the college composition classes wearied of writing that one last essay. Sympathetic with their feelings, yet wanting them to continue practicing their writing skills, I decided to assign group essays for the final writing project.

College students, business people, judges, scriptwriters, congressional members, and staff writers for magazines and newspapers among others develop written products using writing teams. It seemed a valid writing activity.

Group writing uses the same tasks as individual writing. It involves choosing a topic, brainstorming ideas, outlining, developing a rough draft, editing, and submitting a final essay.

Furthermore, group writing offers experiences that individual writing does not. It exposes students to the pleasures and the difficulties of working with others. Students get to express ideas which may or may not be accepted by the group. Students have to decide how to share the workload. Some students feel forced to accept more responsibility to ensure that the task gets finished. These difficulties dramatize the problems and the search for solutions that often occur in the 'real' work world.

Before the activity began, I explained the assignment (they were to write an Extended Definition essay) and the evaluation process. Each student received two grades: one from the completed essay and one from a group evaluation of their participation.

I then divided the class into groups ranging from three to five members. I balanced the writing skills of the groups by placing a skilled writer with a weak one and then distributed the average writers among the groups. This way, each group had an equal chance to do well on the essay.

The able students assumed the leadership roles and guided the group to its goal. Other students contributed plans for organizing, compiling the rough draft, editing, and writing the final. Each group planned its own strategy

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to complete the assignment by the due date.

I gave the groups a file folder in which to keep their written work. I collected the folder at the end of class daily. I kept track of their progress by reviewing the folder's contents, observing the groups, answering questions, and offering words of encouragement.

The groups worked to select a topic, write an outline and a rough draft. The rough draft was duplicated so that each member had a copy to edit individually and collectively.

The final essay emerged from the process. Participants received the grade assigned to the essay. Students then evaluated each other's contributions to the group. From these anonymous evaluations and my observations, students obtained the second grade for their efforts.

The writing experience was successful. The essays were satisfactory and the students were kind in their assessments of themselves and of each other.

After the activity, I asked the students to evaluate what they liked and didn't like about writing a group essay. Generally, student reactions to the assignment were positive. Peggy, summing up the feelings of most students, wrote:

> I liked collaborating with others to get many different ideas on how to approach the subject. When editing, someone could be in charge of one part of the essay like spelling, tense, and structure. If someone had 'writer's block' one day, someone else could help out. This was a good experience because it helped me learn to work with others and to help others work together.

Susan commented:

> I thought it gave us a chance to see other people's style of writing. At first I thought a group essay would not work. I thought our writing styles would 'clash'. In all, it helped me because I received criticism that I needed to improve my writing.

Ironically the negative reactions to the assignment were really "positive" experiences to have. By working in groups, students recognized the problems of being criticized, of motivating others, and of blending writing styles to achieve a unified essay. "It was difficult," said Chris, "to join different writing styles into one essay. The hardest part was trying to find logical transitions between the paragraphs written in very different styles."

The problems students discovered and the steps taken to solve them were valuable writing experiences. I listened as students discussed sentence structure, organization patterns, and style. Whether the students knew it or not, they reinforced each other with the concepts of writing we had learned in class.

Receiving criticism isn't pleasant, but most students accept it graciously and subsequently learn to improve their written work. Constructive criticism, however, even in a non-threatening environment, can still be painful. Adam wrote:

> Some people in the group were too picky. They chopped my paragraph apart and made a big deal about little things. Some group members didn't agree with many of my ideas and decided to omit them from the essay.

Adam's comment reflected how many students felt when their idea was rejected. Students soon realized that the rejection was not a personal jab, but rather the need for the group to use only that information necessary to complete the task.

The group essay was beneficial and just the lift the students wanted to keep them interested in writing that last essay. As Laurie said, "I enjoyed doing a group project simply to do something different from the usual routine."

NEW COMPUTER NEWSLETTER

COMPUTERS AND COMPOSITION is a newsletter designed to inform its readers about computer applications in composition research and the composition classroom. It will be published quarterly, starting in November 1983. Writing teachers interested in the uses of computers and computer software may submit short articles (1000 words or less) to

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FROM DARKNESS INTO LIGHT:

A GROUP PROCESS APPROACH TO THE RESEARCH PAPER

Glenn Spiegelhalder

The Freshman English research paper stubbornly remains one of the most unpopular rites of passage experienced by every new generation of college students. Despite our most enlightened efforts to understand the writing process and to ameliorate the fear and trembling inherent in it, tens of thousands of freshmen still set out alone every semester, venturing into unfamiliar territory in quest of that elusive beast called the research paper. They must survive an ordeal lasting months and return with an acceptable trophy of the hunt dripping on the end of their pens. The sad part of this saga is that many of them fail to return at all, and others are doomed to repeat this primitive ritual time and again before acquiring the skills required to capture the quarry. I remember one student who repeated the research paper course three times before she was able to complete the task; I suspect she may have liked the instructor because I was presented with a birthday cake the last time around--but I would have preferred the paper in the first semester to the cake in the third.

The research paper has always been a formidable obstacle to our students, and even some of our instructors elect the vicissitudes of basic English over the uncertainties of the research course whenever there is any choice in the matter. Of the three courses in our freshman curriculum (Basic English, Expository Writing, and Research and Critical Writing) the attrition rate has been disproportionately high in the third course which includes the research paper and the introduction to the critical analysis of literature. It is not unusual to find a class that has lost half of its members by the end of the semester, almost always because the research paper was not completed. Over the last ten years we have purchased a wide variety of audio-visual materials on the research paper, we have designed any number of sophisticated library orientations, and we even published our own text (an individualized approach to the research paper which presumed to guide the student through the process from start to finish). These efforts seemed to be in touch with the times, yet the basic pattern of instruction re-

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mained the same--and so did the attrition rates. Then, about four years ago, I learned that one of my colleagues, Helen Bonner, had been using group activities extensively in her teaching and was experimenting with a group process approach to the research paper.

Although I had been using small discussion groups successfully, I had not tried much in the way of group writing; in fact, I had recently evaluated one instructor whose expository writing class was engaged in group editing, and I had not been impressed with the near chaos which I had observed. Nevertheless, I decided to look into the group research paper idea and decide if it were worth attempting. I had several discussions with Helen and was encouraged by her enthusiasm for the process. These conversations proved invaluable when I launched my own groups the following semester, for I went into the forest with my eyes open and with a general map of the territory in hand.

Two large themes dominated her observations about the group process, and I soon discovered that these were quite well-founded. I would, therefore, like to share them and to suggest they they may be viewed as general principles or ground rules underlying the technique. In the first place, she was convinced that an appreciation of group dynamics was critically important. The students must have some understanding of how groups interact, and the instructor must be able to construct a framework which allows the groups to assume responsibility for their own progress. For example, group members should be able to resolve most of their problems without relying on constant intervention by the teacher. I would recommend studying a book such as Burgoon, Heston and McCroskey's Small Group Communication: A Functional Approach (see bibliography) which includes an extensive bibliography for further reading as well as an appendix describing methods for evaluating group interaction. The other conviction my colleague held was that the process was not perfect; indeed, there were certain disadvantages inherent to the system. The advantages, however, were substantial and seemed to demonstrate methodological superiority over the conventional approach.

My purpose here is to present a model, based on my own experience, which I hope will prove useful to the teacher who has experienced the frustrations of the traditional research paper and who would like to experiment with an alternate method. I shall presently attempt to describe the process in sufficient detail, but first I think it important to elaborate a theoretical base on which the group method may be defended. This is necessary because I have observed that many teachers who have come to me, anxious to implement the group research paper, were interested in the process for the wrong reason--and this relates to one of the particular problems that, lacking a theoretical base, I was initially unprepared to deal with effectively.

The practical application of the group process evolved in response to a continuing increase in the number of students allowed in each section of the research writing course. The average class size five years ago had been between twenty to twenty-five students--now most classes begin with thirty to thirty-five students. My colleague had indicated that she was concerned about this trend, and she believed that it seriously impaired the instructor's ability to provide the necessary individual attention throughout the course of a project as complex and as intimidating as the research paper. I shared this concern, and thus my initial interest in the group process may be described as practical rather than theoretical. I really had no reason to be dissatisfied with my conventional methodology, for my attrition rate was not excessive and most of my students were achieving the course objectives. My success, however, was the result of intensive work with my students, spending many hours with them in the classroom, many days with them in the library, and many weeks with them in continuous conferences during which we reviewed rough drafts. As the size of the classes expanded, this kind of intensive effort was rapidly reaching the point of physical impossibility.

Now, the unsuspected problem to which I have referred--if you have not already guessed--turned out to be suspicion on the part of some colleagues and some administrators that those little groups in your classroom had been created for the sole purpose of avoiding the backbreaking, mindnumbing chore of grading all of those papers at the end of the term. This was obviously the motive of some of the teachers who later approached me on the subject--which is why I have said that some teachers are interested in the process for the wrong reason. If, however, the teacher is committed to enhancing the learning experience through the use of the group process, the amount of work is in no way reduced; it is simply refocused and rechanneled into more time-effective patterns of work. The teacher who anticipates that the small group approach will provide a "quick fix" for the research paper blues is likely to be bitterly disappointed. For example, the convenient ten-step research paper ladder must be replaced by a new experimental prototype which needs constant fine tuning and thus becomes challenging for even the most resourceful teacher. In fact, I have observed that it is not unusual for some teachers to abandon the group method and seek comfortable refuge in the more familiar traditional approach.

For those who persevere, success may even prove something of an embarrassment. One of my early experiences with the group paper was with a summer session class, and a shocking 100% of the students finished the course; if this were not bad enough, I also had to give more A's than is decent--but the truth is, they earned them. Thus, in practical terms, the group method can often be justified on the basis of positive results. This defense may seem impressive at first, but it does not go deep enough, for there remains the lurking suspicion that the teacher has been practicing some form of legerdemain and that the method may be pedagogically unsound. Fortunately, I was to discover a very simple yet substantial theoretical basis which seems to adequately explain *why* the group research paper works so surprisingly well.

Shortly after my first experience with the group process, I was enrolled in a class offered to our faculty by Dayton A. Roberts of the Higher Education Department at Texas Tech University. The course was College Teaching, and the primary emphasis was on the recognition of student learning styles. Dr. Roberts' research in this area is based on data collected through administering the Myers-Briggs Personality Type Indicator (MBTI) to a large sampling of faculty and students, particularly in community colleges. In his article "Personalizing the Learning Process" (Revista/Review Interamericana 7:1, 139-143), Roberts describes the MBTI as follows:

> The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) is a self-administered 166 item self-validating instrument published in 1962 by the Educational Testing Service. The MBTI and the supporting research stemming from its development expanded and clarified Jung's theory that seemingly chance variation in human behavior is in fact not due to chance; it is the logical result of observable and measurable differences in mental functioning (p. 140).

This essay contains much interesting information on learning styles, but for our purposes here it is sufficient to note that Roberts' research uses Jungian personality types and his results point to a divergence between faculty and student personality-type distribution:

> This disparity of personality-type distribution between faculty and community college students is typical throughout the nation; it indicates that a preponderance of intuitive (N) types are teaching mostly sensing (S) types in our community colleges. Sensing types do not hear and experience things in the same manner as intuitive types see and hear and experience things. The higher the sensing (S) score or the higher the intuitive (N) score, the more pronounced these differences in perceiving become. Because of these differences, sensing (S) types will

> not prefer the same teaching and learning styles as intuitive (N) types (p. 142).

In the verbal disciplines, such as English and speech, Roberts found that 70% - 80% of the faculty were indeed intuitive types. The intuitive trait appears on his MBTI Type Table (p. 141) as a characteristic of introversion; Americans, MBTI results suggest, are 75% extroverted and 25% introverted--and the same distribution applies to students in open-door institutions on a nationwide basis.

I felt like St. Paul on the road to Damascus; this revelation opened my eyes, and I could clearly see why our traditional approach to teaching the research paper so frequently proved ineffective and even threatening for a vast number of students. We were not only teaching them an activity inimicable to their personality types, but we were also employing methods alien to their preferred learning styles! When I read a short report that Helen Bonner has written describing her experiences with the group research paper, I was impressed by the fact that her findings paralleled Roberts' percentages for extroversion and introversion in the student population:

> I have taught the group research paper for three semesters, getting student feedback at the end of each semester. About 75% of the class is always highly in favor of that method, saying they learn from each other, get to know each other, get more excited about the project and feel more confident in themselves. There is always a strong 25% who feel held back by slower members. These are often "A" students who are more comfortable working alone. Perhaps they will find later their group experience was valuable, or perhaps there needs to be a more immediate way to compensate them for their help.

I have further concluded that there is also a probable cultural bias inherent in the conventional research paper methodology. This possibility occurred to me when Professor Roseann Gonzalez, Director of the University of Arizona's M.A. in E.S.L. Program, spoke to the 1982 Southern Arizona Writing Project (SAWP) in which I was participating. She made the observation that Mexican-American students respond well to group activities because their is a strongly communal culture--and a library, for example, was likely to be a particularly alien environment. At El Paso Community College about two thirds of our students are Hispanic, and I suspect that another reason for the success of the group research paper is certainly the fact that it is more compatible with their cultural milieu. Nor is this insight limited to the Hispanic student, for I have found that Thom Hawkins (Group

Inquiry Techniques for Teaching Writing) reports Betty Rizzo's success using peer teaching at the City College of New York to "disadvantaged students from the New York City ghetto." Hawkins concludes that "structured peer group interaction has important implications for the teaching of standard English composition to speakers of nonstandard English" (p. 7). Finally, the SAWP workshop was also addressed by Brenda Even of the Adlerian Psychological Institute, and she shared three observations regarding adult learning; the first of these was that adults enjoy small group activities, and the second was they they hate to waste time. Many of today's college students are, of course, adults, and I have noted that they function extremely well in the group context. One of their obvious contributions is keeping the discussion on the subject, for they have learned the importance of using time efficiently.

I would prefer to consider the process itself, my model, in terms of three stages in the writing process rather than using an "X"-number-of-steps approach. I have always found the "steps" troublesome because, in the first place, they sometimes overlap, and, in the second place, they are artificial--treating the research process as if it were a layer cake that can only be produced by following an exacting recipe. The "steps" are still very much in evidence, but they are now embodied in a more fluid context. I believe this is one aspect of the process for which the individual teacher should devise his or her own pattern of presentation--and the groups inveterately develop their own modi operandi for the application of this information anyway.

In the beginning there is still the topic, and student participation in topic selection is highly desirable. Richard Gebhardt discusses the value of such student involvement in his College English article "Teamwork and Feedback: Broadening the Base of Collaborative Writing." Our course is overcrowded with content--we must produce a research paper and also prepare the students for critical writing in the sophomore literature courses--and therefore I begin the process of topic selection almost immediately, before the groups have even been formed. The students are asked to bring a list of three to five subjects that they would genuinely enjoy studying in some depth. Then, during the next class meeting, each student makes a selection from his or her list and explains to the class why the subject would be an interesting topic for research and writing.

This procedure provides a natural forum for the consideration of what constitutes a good topic for a research paper. If the topic is to broad, too limited, too controversial--or is any of the taboos to be found in every textbook--I can readily explain the problem using a live example. No freeze-dried specimens need be dissected. Sometimes the topics can be saved by restriction or expansion, and the rationale as well as the technique involved in either case may be explained using live bait. If the topic, for some reason, proves completely unacceptable, the student generally has another one in reserve that will prove satisfactory. The goal is to allow each class member to generate at least one promising topic, and these are listed on the board as the process is being accomplished.

The next task is to reduce the list of topics to those which have the broadest appeal to the class as a whole. In this democratic procedure, each student may vote as often as he or she likes as we go down the list, but they are cautioned not to vote for any that they would not personally enjoy working with for an extended period of time. The net result of this activity should be a manageable list of appropriate topics for a good research paper.

The formation of the groups is another early activity of the pre-writing situation. Aside from the final evaluation, this may be one of the slipperiest parts of the process and should be approached with caution. The literature on group processing describes many of the possibilities for dealing with this delicate matter--but is bereft of any consensus. Mary K. Healy briefly alludes to the more common strategies in Using Student Writing Response Groups in the Classroom (p. 8) and then lamely admits she has abandoned them all; now she just tells the students to "get into groups." This is a good formula for disaster when it comes to writing the research paper collaboratively. She allows that her results are sometimes "messy," and I am convinced that any random method is likely to prove inappropriate for a successful group project as extended and as complex as a research paper.

My own system has evolved to the point where I have settled on two general criteria for determining group membership: writing skills and personality types. A diagnostic writing sample from the first class meeting and the results from a short-form personality-type indicator are my sources of information. In the first category, I am concerned with identifying the more advanced writers and ensuring that they are distributed among the groups; in the latter category I am interested in achieving some balance between personality types within each group. In 1982-83 I tried an instrument that Dr. Shirley Caskey is using at El Paso Community College to study student learning styles. The results of this assessment indicated whether a student is field-dependent or field-independent and allowed me to predict which students were likely to be strong influences on group interaction and which students were likely to defer to others in this respect. I will not presume to endorse a particular form of testing and imply that such is a necessary component of the system. I do advocate, however, compiling a multifaceted profile which will replace guessowrk with deliberate method. Colleagues with backgrounds in counseling have suggested to me that a variety of readily available assessment instruments might prove useful for my purposes, so I would recommend working with a counselor to identify a test which is accessible and appropriate. These tests also have ancillary advantages in that they help students deal with self-concept adjustments, and they "personalize the learning process" by establishing--from the outset--a humanistic rather than a turgid academic climate for the research paper assignment.

All of the data on topic preferences (from a final list of about eight subjects the student indicates three in order of preference), writing skills (scored holistically), and personality type or learning style is recorded on 3 X 5 cards on which the students have provided personal information at the first class meeting. These cards can be spread out and arranged and rearranged as I agonize and compromise over the ideal membership for each group. Eventually, I hope that it will be possible to expedite and refine this procedure by using my own computer.

The optimum group size, as reported in the literature and based on my own experience, is five to six students; this allows for an equitable distribution of the workload and also provides a group large enough to absorb the loss of one or even two members.

While all of the foregoing activities have been taking place, I have, from the first class meeting, been discussing the rationale for the group approach and exploring a few ideas related to group dynamics and group learning theories. For example, we consider ways in which teamwork and committee-work are a reflection of social situations and are, in fact, responsible for much of the work routinely accomplished in a typical job experience. Thom Hawkins refers to this value in Group Learning Techniques, observing that "the small peer group provides a close approximation to the way communication takes place out in the real world . . ." (p. 5). I point out that failure to work well with others has been identified as the leading cause for being fired from a job, and good interpersonal relationships and effective communication skills appear to be the primary factors to which promotion and career advancement are attributed.

During the course of these discussions, we cover techniques for solving problems within the group framework, and I alert them to some of the difficulties they are likely to encounter. The most serious of these is that some students may, at times, feel that they are shouldering an unfair amount of responsibility for the group's progress. These will usually be the intuitive types who are more comfortable with reading and writing--that 25% to whom Helen Bonner referred. I point out that it is natural in any group situation for some members to assume leadership roles, and I suggest that if they find themselves in such a position now, it will probably keep on happening to them throughout their careers--and that the present context is a good opportunity to practice leadership skills. I should note that I do not appoint leaders or have groups elect or select leaders; this is usually futile and is quite unnecessary because the groups develop their own personalities and structures through a kind of "natural selection." I do, on occasion, suggest to some groups that they allow a member with obviously superior composition skills to assume an editorial function as group responsibilities are defined.

My cautionary remarks notwithstanding, the fact remains that some groups will still try to impose upon a member who they sense will be able to produce results for them--that is, a good grade for the group. Thom Hawkins compares the teacher's role in a group situation to the presence of a ghost. In other words, the teacher should generally be able to move about the room, from group to group, without visibly altering the work in progress. In the situation I have been describing, the time has come for the ghost to appear on the ramparts and discreetly suggest that there is something rotten in the state of Denmark.

The only serious student complaints that I have ever received concerning the group research paper have been the result of just this type of circumstance. This situation occurred the first time I used the group approach and involved a talented young woman in a group with four otiose young men. Such is the consequence of an unfavorable combination of group members (despite my careful calculations, which do not address imponderables like attitude and ambition), and since then I have found it wise to also consider the balance between males and females as a contributing factor to my assignment criteria. Thus far, I have put about thirty groups through the process, and this particular defect has recurred about three times, about one group in ten; I find this to be an acceptable factor of risk. I should add that I make it clear, at the very beginning, that no one in the class is compelled to participate in the group process, and once in a while one or two students do choose to work alone. Also, there have been instances in which two students with a common interest have asked to work as a team, and this generally proves satisfactory.

The last phase of the pre-writing is the "step" often referred to as preliminary reading or research. Each student in the group finds one background source on the topic, preferably in a periodical, and summarizes the contents. Library orientations and related tasks are accomplished during this phase which typically lasts about one week. The groups then synthesize their findings and prepare a ten-minute oral presentation for the class in which they introduce their subject and discuss the purpose of the paper they envision writing. The class responds with questions--they have been primed for this and have been told that the better the questions the more likely I will abstain from the inquisition. I consider this activity to be significant because it serves to provide an early sense of audience awareness. In other words, the questioning represents the reaction of the common reader, and the subsequent framing of the thesis statement and working outline can then reflect what an actual audience wants to know.

The writing stage commences with the formulation of the thesis statement. I lecture briefly on the subject and provide a number of examples from previous papers. The groups may choose their own approach to writing the thesis, but I suggest that each member write one statement that reflects the purpose of the paper as they perceive it. When these are examined by the groups, some will find one in particular that they like and decide to "go for it." Other groups will decide to combine parts of several individual statements to produce a thesis on which they all agree. Koch and Brazil's Strategies for Teaching the Composition Process includes a section on group thesis statements, and it merits examination by a teacher new to this idea. One of the prerogatives from the dark ages that I insist on preserving, in this busy democracy of the small group, is the right to pass final judgement on thesis statements. I see no point in letting the process run aground because the purpose of the paper has not been clearly defined.

The construction of a working outline is the next procedure, and the groups then assign sections of the outline to each member to research. In most instances, there is much overlapping information in their sources, and a lively exchange of notecards and xerox copies is likely to ensue. The individual student is finally responsible for writing up his or her portion of the paper, but a great deal of collaborative writing may--and should--take place. As Richard Gebhardt points out in "Teamwork and Feedback: Broadening the Base of Collaborative Writing," collaboration is frequently viewed as an editorial process, reserved for "peer editing" at the end of the writing activity. Certainly, such an editorial function is highly appropriate in the case of the group research paper, for final editing is one of the procedures handled so woefully in the conventional approach where each student throws together a paper at the last minute. However, the sharing of writing in progress--such as Peter Elbow describes in Writing With Power--can be a productive way to solve writing problems and generate ideas as the student works through his or her material and begins to organize and write. The context of sharing is also important for the group paper because it will assist in achieving cohesion and consistency among the sections by different authors. The shared writing of transitional sentences is particularly important, and some groups choose to collaborate for the writing of the paper's introduction and conclusion.

The editing function properly belongs to the post-writing stage. Peer editing begins with an exchange of rough drafts and concludes with the proofreading of the final document. I continue to find that reading rough drafts is a worthwhile enterprise on my part, and I offer to do so when the group editing is finished. As of this past year, however, I now insist on typed copy because this usually necessitates a further draft which enhances readability, reduces minor errors, and approximates the final product. The groups adopt differing ways of getting the final paper typed and compiling the notes and the bibliography. These are the kinds of problems which the group should be able to solve without my help. As far as the typing is concerned, some groups arrange to have it done by an outside typist--just as students working on their own frequently do. Other groups are fortunate enough to have a typist in their midst who can be convinced to volunteer, and some groups decide each member will type his or her section, dividing the front and back matter equally among the members. The page on which the outline appears, in any case, will indicate which student is responsible for each portion of the paper. The ultimate scenario, of course, will be groups of students networking from their home computers and transmitting drafts and final copy to the instructor's terminal and printer.

Evaluation is another sensitive matter that the teacher will find challenging. Like the determination of group membership, any number of systems may prove effective if they are carefully planned and well-structured. In most small group situations, some form of self-evaluation is an efficacious means of providing feedback for both the group and the instructor. Checklists are extremely helpful and may be used throughout the activity as well as for final evaluation; Mary K. Healy and Thom Hawkins include examples of such checklists which might be used as models.

My own system produces three grades for each student, and the average of these equals the student's final grade in the course. I first grade the paper as a whole, using essentially the same approach I followed when the papers were produced individually; then, I assign another grade for the specific section of the paper written by each student. This is my contribution: one grade for the complete paper and one individual grade per student. In the meantime, the group members have evaluated themselves and each other on forms that I have provided. Thus, the third grade is generated by the students themselves through peer evaluations (the self-evaluation question is for my information only and is not included in the determination of the grade). There is also a space on this form for comments, and these are sometimes revealing insights into matters such as how fairly the work was distributed during the final stages of the process. I enter all of these results on another form I have designed and give this to the student. The form clearly shows every grade the student has received for the project--including those given by their peers (anonymously recorded, of course)--and the calculation of the final grade is included.

I have not been able to describe in detail every aspect of the process as I have used it, but I hope the pattern which has been adumbrated is adequate in terms of being a point of departure for any teacher seriously interested in the group research paper. I make some modifications to the system every time I use it, and some of these are recursive innovations that I try again after having experimented with a variant approach. For example, I sometimes begin with an arbitrary general topic area instead of allowing the students to find topics at random. I did this three years ago and then again last year when the college became involved in a project to collect and publish student writing on border-related issues. I began by putting the subject "The Border" on the board, and then we developed subtopical categories such as environment, culture, history, crime, politics, health, and transportation. The next step was to brainstorm potential restricted topics that would refine each of these areas, and the students were asked to bring a list of three to five such topics that interested them to the next class meeting. We then proceeded as I have outlined earlier. This method has the advantage of focusing the students' interests immediately on a meaningful content area, and it also precludes dealing with some of the shopworn subjects they might otherwise suggest. In this instance, the borderlands topics had the added advantage of broadening the research base to include a rich variety of primary sources. I always make a point of encouraging personal interviews, and in this context they appeared in abundance on the final bibliographies.

About the time I began my experiments with the group process for the research paper, I assumed teaching responsibilities in our technical writing curriculum. In the fall of 1982 I decided to adapt the collaborative writing process to the formal report in the technical report writing course. In this application the collaboration begins almost at once with the writing of a proposal for the project and continues to include a progress report (oral and written) and then the finished report. Although I do a diagnostic assignment--and sometimes a reading level, personality type, or learning style test--the groups are formed primarily along the lines of common degree plans, and the reports are written on subjects specific to their major fields (in which they must identify a real or realistic audience). The final report requires a sophisticated format with elements such as a letter of transmittal, an abstract, a table of contents, subject headings, graphics, and technical-style documentation. Many of the productions by individual writers in previous semesters were disappointing, but the group papers from the six classes in which I instituted the collaborative process showed marked improvements. The results in the technical writing course were even more impressive than those with the freshman research paper and revitalized my enthusiasm for the collaborative method.

The future of the research paper in English departments is uncertain. The writing across the curriculum movement, for example, may lead to the teaching of research in the students' own disciplines. For the moment, however, many of us will still be teaching the research paper, and I have two convictions which account for my interest in this particular endeavor. First, I believe that teaching research skills is more important then ever before. Our society is in the midst of what is being called an information revolution, and students must be able to acquire and implement this information in a purposeful manner. Albert Einstein once remarked that it was no longer possible to know everything, even in your own area of specialization; therefore, he said, being able to find the answers to your questions was now just as important as what you actually know. Secondly, the conventional approach to the research paper has failed to motivate students to learn and to appreciate these very important research skills. As Stephen North points out in "Teaching Research Writing: Five Criteria," our traditional methods have proved inadequate and pedagogical reform has been long overdue. The time has come to bring the research process out of the darkness of the primitive initiation rite and into the light of our new understanding of the writing process.

Bibliography

The success of a group writing effort will be significantly influenced by the understanding of the process which the teacher has at his or her command, and those interested in pursuing this type of approach have two categories of resources which may be profitably explored before launching a group project such as a research paper. The first source of information is another teacher who has been able to produce results through the use of a similar strategy. My first experiences with the group research paper were influenced by my former colleague Helen Bonner, who suggested a preliminary structure and helped me to anticipate many of the problems that would inevitably arise. The second category is comprised of the wide variety of information available in the literature concerning group writing, group dynamics, and the teaching of research writing itself. Although little or nothing has been published about writing the research paper using the group approach, much valuable literature exists on the group writing process, and the consensus in recent articles on the research paper is that the conventional methodology is badly in need of reform. By exploring the sources which I have selected for this bibliography, the teacher contemplating a group research project will be better prepared to meet the challenges of revitalizing one of the most moribund areas of the English curriculum. I would have been most grateful for such a bibliography when I first attempted the task.

Boiarsky, Carolyn, "Group Processing: An Inside Look." Arizona English Bulletin, 23(1), pp. 96-101.

Takes the position that teachers and students must understand the complete process of "the mystical experience of group processing" and be certain of their respective roles if the activity is to produce results beyond the proofreading stage. Examines the dual role of the group member (writer and critic) and proposes a heuristic for determining if a piece of writing "works." Suggests the use of a checklist for establishing a rubric that may be applied to considerations such as grammar, syntax and style. Includes tables summarizing assumptions and logistics of group processing (as reported in the sources identified in her bibliography).

Burgoon, Michael; Heston, Judee K. and McCroskey, James, *Small Group Communication: A Functional Approach*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1974.

Presents an overview of the dynamics of small group interaction and focuses on areas likely to be of interest to the teacher who desires a fuller understanding of the group process. Discusses the unique characteristics of a small group and the role of persuasion in a small group context. Covers topics such as conflict resolution, decision making, leadership, and participation. Includes an extensive bibliography and an appendix which describes instruments for observing small group activity through the use of interaction analysis.

Gebhardt, Richard, "Teamwork and Feedback: Broadening the Base of Collaborative Writing." *College English*, *42*(1), pp. 69-74.

Discusses the emotional dimension of collaborative writing as a neglected aspect of the process which should be harnessed in support of the technical and intellectual processes generally stressed. Suggests that fear and isolation inhibit the student from the start--and therefore collaboration at the end of the process is limited to an editorial function. Proposes that a collaborative writing strategy out to be employed for (1) finding a topic, (2) generating content, and (3) focusing on an audience.

Hawkins, Thom, *Group Inquiry Techniques for Teaching Writing*. Urbana, Illinois: ERIC Clearing House on Reading and Communication Skills and NCTE, 1976.

Explores a group teaching model in terms of both theory and practice. Advocates a "parceled classroom" in which the inquiry (or discovery) method is combined with a group approach. Suggests that students can assume much of the responsibility for their own learning and that the teacher serve as a facilitator who questions, listens, and observes. Examines selected literature on the subject of the teacher's role in the group learning process and describes strategies for structuring groups, establishing interaction, and monitoring group progress. Includes a smaple form for use in group self-evaluation and summarizes results from student responses to it.

Healy, Mary K., Using Student Writing Response Groups in the Classroom. Bay Area Writing Project Publications, No. 12. Berkeley: Bay Area Writing Project, 1980.

Describes a comprehensive system for implementing response groups and argues that more fluent student writing is produced as a result. Advocates a gradual approach in which students are trained to recognize effective writing and to respond to it with specific observations. Suggests preliminary activities such as audio and video taping, student examples reproduced on dittos and overhead transparencies, and class responses to selections read aloud by the instructor. Provides useful examples of checklists used for self- and teacher-evaluation of group effectiveness. Includes sections on group membership, physical arrangements in the classroom, and the teacher's role in monitoring group progress.

Koch, Carl and Brazil, James M., Strategies for Teaching the Composition Process. Urbana, Illinois: NCTE, 1978.

Recognizes that students often feel uncomfortable about writing and that "nonstandard dialect speakers" in particular may feel inadequate. Develops 29 activities divided under four headings--The Comfort Zone (6), Pre-writing (12), The Writing Stage (5), and The Post-Writing Stage (6)--and 22 of them are designated as group or group optional. Recommends 4-6 students for most exercises structured specifically for small groups. Includes strategies highly appropriate for the teaching of the research paper as a group process (e.g. Consensus Decision Making, A Long Writing Project, A Group Approach to Thesis Statements and Topic Sentences, and Peer Essay Reading). Contains two interesting appendices: (A) Setting Priorities for Diagnosing Student Writing and (B) Diagnosing Dialect Features in Student Writing.

McNabb, Scott E., "If Research Papers Must Be Taught." Arizona English Bulletin, 22(3), pp. 126-131.

Proposes that the conventional approach to the research paper is lacking in "sense and purpose." Suggests that an overemphasis on correct form produces stilted, impersonal writing and denies the student a valuable learning experience focusing on the discovery process. Describes an approach to the research paper based on four principles:
(1) learning about the topic rather than form is emphasized,
(2) helping students choose topics that interest them is stressed, (3) pursuing the topic from an original point of view is advocated, and (4) separating documentation from the content during evaluation is recommended. Concludes that research papers can be taught utilizing the understanding of the writing process now applied to other written assignments.

North, Stephen. "Teaching Research Writing: Five Criteria." Freshman English News, 9(2), pp. 17-19.

Takes the position that research writing as it is conventionally taught is often futile and argues that our assumptions regarding teaching the research paper should be reconsidered. Describes five problem areas in the traditional method, the most serious of which is that it is "alien and even harmful to our students' developing composing processes." Suggests that new strategies to the teaching of research writing be evaluated on the basis of five criteria which include writing across the curriculum and making the research paper a "natural step in the students' writing development." Concludes that present methods are inadequate and that "pedagogical reform" has been long overdue.

"What to Look For in Groups." The 1972 Handbook for Group Facilitators. University Associates, 1972.

Identifies the two major ingredients of group interaction as content and process. Presents a 38-question heuristic for analyzing the process within groups and categorizes these under the headings of participation, styles of influence, group decision making procedures, task functions, maintenance functions, group atmosphere, membership, feelings and norms. Provides the group facilitator with specific factors useful in monitoring group performance and assisting with problem solution.

CALL FOR PAPERS

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CREATIVE REVISION THROUGH COLLABORATIVE RE-VISIONS

Frank C. Cronin

Peter Elbow sees revision as a continuing process of "discovering meaning."[1] For Donald Murray "writing is revision, and the first draft is only the beginning of a discovery process."[2] And according to one of the typical skilled writers of Nancy Sommers' distinguished research, "revision is the essence of writing."[3]

Revision, in the view of Murray, Elbow, Sommers, and all recent research means cycles of rewriting that alternate with new periods of incubation, brainstorming, and the repeated use of most of the other pre-writing strategies. Thus, pre-writing, writing, and revision often happen concurrently in the writing processes of skilled writers, and the skilled writer keeps going back again and again--in cycles that concentrate on one or a very few problems--to make changes in what has already been written.

Donald Murray notes that there are two principal phases of revision: internal and external. Internal revision is " . . . everything writers do to discover and develop what they have to say." By this he means what Linda Flower calls the development of the early, "reader-based" drafts in which writers work out their ideas for themselves, discovering, in Murray's words, "their content form, language and voice."[4]

Murray's "external revision" is simply reorganizing one's material into a form that is logical, coherent and interesting for a specific target audience--in other words, gradually progressing from drafts that primarily consist of thinking on paper to working out audience problems such as form and organization. The end result is what Linda Flower calls "reader-based prose."[5] The editing and proofreading (which novice writers habitually confuse with revision) then follow the cycles of internal and external revision.

Teaching the skills and strategies of pre-writing, first draft writing, the cycles of revision, and editing is most pleasantly and effectively accomplished through the collaborative learning of teacher mini-conferences, live feedback from small student discussion groups, and the whole class workshop--and variations thereof--even with younger

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student writers.[6] All of these strategies have been well researched and classroom tested, and the highly successful conference methods have been tested and fully developed over a period of years. The best single explanation of the conference method can be found in the NCTE book Eight Approaches to Teaching Composition in an article by Thomas A. Carnicelli of the University of New Hampshire.[7] In this excellent and very readable essay, Carnicelli acknowledges that the principles he uses and recommends are "borrowed almost wholesale from Rodger Garrison."[8]

At this point, conscientious teachers with many large class sections to teach may recoil in horror at the thought of conferences with all those students! Consequently, I hasten to add that conferences need be no longer than a few minutes in length to be effective; also they may be held during class time while the rest of the students are writing and, best of all, the conference system either greatly reduces the load of papers to be graded at home or entirely eliminates the grading of papers outside class. This is because both teacher and student sit down side by side and read the successive drafts together.

In these short conferences, experienced teachers quickly spot problems and patterns of problems and prescribe specific strategies from their writing doctor's bag of remedies for one or just a few of the problems. As all the experts insist, this does not mean cataloging everything that is wrong with individual papers, but rather giving students one or two, or just a few things to work on until the next short conference. (A long litany of corrections would only confuse and discourage the student anyway). In these few moments, the teacher should also communicate personal interest, emotional support, and perhaps provide a mini-pep talk to motivate work on some specific problem or several problems.

This procedure is far more effective than traditional home-grading because the teacher can communicate these insights and this personal support far more effectively in a few moments of dialogue than many more minutes worth of often illegible, impersonal scribbling in the margins. In the conference, however brief, the teacher can ascertain whether the student understands prior and current suggestions for improvement and also provide further explanation when necessary, answer questions, while observing that all-important body language, especially in watching the student's facial expressions. The subsequent effect on students of sincere teacher concern, reassurance, and encouragement expressed in words and facial expressions is the antithesis of the emotional effect of being handed a paper impersonally slashed up with red pencil marks. Students usually do not read extensive--and therefore often demoralizing--corrections anyway, but too often merely toss the teacher's hard work into the nearest trash can. Subsequently, the teacher must correct the same mistakes repeatedly in every essay; the end result is bitterness and discouragement on both sides.

On the other hand, the teacher has almost no papers to grade at home with the (Garrison) conference method, and Garrison himself actually manages twenty conferences in a fifty-minute class hour by treating only one problem in each conference. After having seen the same paper in a series of such short conferences, the teacher has practically memorized it and--like a skilled doctor--can go instantly and intuitively to the specific writing problem to be treated next.

In these personal conferences, dialogue is essential so that students can participate in the discovery of their own difficulties--or even better--sometimes discover the problems for themselves--in relaxed conversation with the teacher. Without that dialogue, many students will never fully understand their problems, much less follow the prescribed remedies; without responses from students, teachers can never be sure that they really got through to them and really helped them. (Thus the teacher must be careful not to fall into the common pitfall of doing all the talking).

If English teachers would just take a short stroll out to the football field, they will see coaches working on one problem at a time, telling individual players precisely what to do to overcome specific problems--and listening to what those individual players have to say in response to make sure that they understand! Of course, learning to write well is a far more complex skill than learning to play football. Nevertheless it is a skill, in fact a complex set of skills: a craft, and no skill or craft of any complexity has ever been mastered by the lecture method!

Furthermore, skillful writing is absolutely necessary for success in college, technical school, and above all, for a world of work in which high technology jobs multiply geometrically, while blue collar jobs are disappearing fast. Technicians as well as executives must continually write reports, for reports are the life-blood of every company, and well-written reports bring recognition and promotion.

If students arrive in the world of work after twelve (or more) expensive years of education without having ever assumed any responsibility for their own learning, their state is pathetic indeed. However, in the collaborative learning which I have been describing, the individual student's assumption of responsibility for his or her education is the lynchpin, the key strategy.

What follows is a set of steps for combining the various collaborative learning techniques which I have found to be highly useful:

(1) First, go around the room with the entire class and have students mention topics that would appeal to them. This provides the opportunity to (a) teach such crucial rhetorical principles as limiting and focusing, audience awareness, etc. by asking such questions as "Would this topic yield fresh, interesting information and insights for your audience of classmates?" etc. and (b) teach students how to get to sources of information to deepen their insights into their chosen subjects, from the Reader's Guide to good source persons. Sometimes one or two sources can provide enough information for a series of papers.

(2) While the class is free-writing or working on their papers, short brainstorming sessions can be held with individual students with the teacher asking questions to discover the individual's real interests, experience and insights with regard to a tentative topic that he or she would like to share with the class audience. The teacher must necessarily be a skilled listener--like a skilled medical diagnostician--who can respond sensitively to student comments, ask questions, make suggestions, and use all the other strategies necessary to foster this one-to-one brainstorming. Pre-writing, of which brainstorming is an essential element, is supposed to take about 85% of the writing process, if anything worthwhile is to result, according to successful writers, researchers, and all of my own research on composing. Thus merely assigning topics on which students really have little or nothing to say short-circuits their unconscious creativity--and almost guarantees discouraging results, student frustration and repugnance for school writing, and encourages such bad writing habits as padding, etc. Ironically, these young students do have many deep, personal concerns and interests which will certainly be concealed from an English teacher who fails to engage in dialogue, to really hear them and respond.

(3) While the class is gathering, incubating and brainstorming material for their papers, small groups or the whole class can evaluate together anonymous examples of strong and weak student papers from previous semesters. Thus students quickly develop the critical powers necessary for progressive improvements in the cycles of their own later revision. Also, many writing problems such as poor organization, lazy, vauge generalizations without validating specifics, the habit of padding with clichés to fill the requisite number of pages, and many other common writing problems begin to be cured in advance through this collaborative criticism of anonymous or teacher-constructed, weak papers.

(4) As students return to in-class writing and the mini-conferences resume, teachers should (a) search for patterns of errors in the weakest, most ungrammatical papers, working on one problem or a few problems at a time (à la Shaughnessy); and (b) concentrate on asking logical and

sometimes tough questions to help them think through their subjects, especially with stronger students.

(5) In the early small-group discussions, students try out their fresh ideas and early drafts on each other. Both in presenting and responding, students begin to develop that sense of audience which is critical for later success in writing. Teachers who want to learn more about this well-researched and highly successful small discussion group format should read Thom Hawkins' pamphlet, Group Inquiry Techniques for Teaching Writing.[9] The small discussion group method, like the conference method, is a powerful means of enabling student writers to receive valuable feedback from fellow students on each successive draft. (They always take peer criticism very seriously). At the same time, students learn very quickly from seeing the flaws in fellow students' writing since they are just too close to their own work to see it objectively. This collaborative learning works wonders partly because talking is a relaxing reprieve from the pressures of writing, a relaxation which opens students up to learning quickly from each other.

(6) However, just putting small groups together is not enough; the groups must be provided with specific tasks to accomplish in evaluating papers: guidelines, checklists and strategies for evaluation. Also they must be made comfortable with each other by getting to know each other so that they will feel free to work together spontaneously. (They should elect a chair and a recorder--and each take turns at those tasks).

(7) When the groups are working, the teacher is not the center of attention and should resist the temptation to barge into discussions to label "right" and "wrong" answers or deliver mini-lectures. Rather he or she should go quietly from group to group as a helper or facilitator, listening most of the time. (Teacher anxiety about losing control will disappear as quickly as they see so many students transformed from passive, mute spectators to active learners).

(8) In all of the research on writing and revising, student writers invariably seem overwhelmed by the large number of constraints that they try to cope with all at once (a psychological impossibility). Also, Linda Sommers' student subjects were so preoccupied with surface problems that they were psychologically blocked from attending to deeper compositional problems (organization, focus, logical explanations, clear orientation to target audiences, putting in the necessary specifics for those audiences, etc.).

Experienced writers cope with this psychological bottleneck through a revising process that is cyclical and evolutionary; i.e. they attend to only a few specific problems in each cycle of revision and defer all others. Thus, according to Sommers, "skilled adult writers employ strategies to handle the overload on their attention." Ironically, even the best adult writers are often quite ashamed of their first drafts because they see them as crude, undeveloped and trite in thought and expression. In other words, their first drafts are often like embryos, which are to be gradually developed through the cycles of revision. Frequently they select one or just a few ideas from among many pages of their first drafts and develop these seeds or kernels. Above all, they avoid "falling in love" with what they have written in the first or second draft.

Therefore, through the mini-conferences, small-group workshops, and whole class workshops, novice writers should similarly learn to pull out and develop the good ideas of their first drafts and put off triggering the distracting obsessions with surface problems that inevitably stifle creativity, especially during the early internal-revision stages of the writing process.

Only in the relaxed dialogue of collaborative learning can the essential strategies of revision be learned--painlessly and pleasantly. For example, when students, with developing drafts of their own subjects in hand, read or pass them around and then respond to fellow student or teacher questions to talk out the gold nuggets (or fertile embryos) that appear in the midst of the clay or deadwood of the first or early drafts, only then does rapid progress come with enthusiasm and finally pleasure.

If teachers have previously taken ample time for collaborative, pre-writing activities and if students have written first drafts on subjects that genuinely interest them for their target audience of classmates in addition to the teacher, then there will be an abundance of good material to ask questions about, praise, and talk out. Thus, through all the collaborative or "talk-write" strategies, novice writers are inspired by the encouraging feedback and especially the practical suggestions to take more time for incubation, brainstorming, and some going back to sources; the gold nuggets become live embryos that develop through successive revision assignments.

(9) As the novice writers are going through the exploratory-developmental process of successive revision assignments, they should be receiving maximum and ongoing feedback--for maximum progress. Therefore, using many whole classes for mini-conferences with the teacher and peer group conferences is time very well spent.

(10) During these mini-conferences, vague, general comments are useless to the novice writer--as they are useless when scribbled on student papers. The research of George Hillocks and so many others clearly indicates that novice writers need explicit, precise, specific suggestions

about what to do next in solving specific writing problems.[10] Furthermore, specific solution strategies will often occur spontaneously to the novice writer through the relaxed dialogue of collaborative learning.

Notes

[1] Peter Elbow, Writing Without Teachers (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973), pp. 12-75.

[2] Donald M. Murray, "Internal Revision: A Process of Discovery," Research on Composing: Points of Departure, ed. Charles R. Cooper and Lee Odell, (NCTC, 1978); reprinted in Donald M. Murray, Learning by Teaching (Montclair, N.J.: Boynton Cook Publishers, 1982), pp. 72-88.

In this new and very useful book, Murray includes a rich abundance of teaching strategies. For example, "Making Meaning Clear: The Logic of Revision" (pp. 88-95) is particularly good; for another good recently-published book which is also rich in practical classroom tips as well as background explanations of recent research for the busy teacher, see Revising: New Essays for Teachers of Writing, ed. Ronald A. Sudol (NCTC, 1982).

[3] Nancy Sommers, Revision in the Composing Process: A Case Study of College Freshmen and Experienced Adult Writers, an unpublished doctoral dissertation (Boston, Mass.: Boston University, 1978) p. 112. See also her "Revision Strategies of Student Writers and Experienced Adult Writers," College Composition and Communication, 31, (1980), pp. 378-387.

[4] Linda Flower, Problem Solving Strategies for Writing (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, Inc., 1981), pp. 144-168.

[5] Ibid., pp. 143-166. See also Linda Flower and John R. Hayes, "The Dynamics of Composing: Making Plans and Juggling Constraints," Cognitive Processes in Writing, ed. L.W. Gregg and E.R. Steinberg (Hillsdale, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum, 1980), pp. 31-50. See also Linda Flower, "Writer-Based Prose," College English, 41, (1979), pp. 19-37.

[6] Current research indicates that children are not aware of audience perspective in writing before the sixth grade. A study by Robert Bracewell et al. suggests that students are not able to revise for a specific audience until grade twelve. (ERIC Document 154 433, C.S. 204 174). Selected results from "Write/Rewrite, A (National) Assessment of Revision Skills" indicated that thirteen-year-olds were successful in revising letters of complaint,especially those who were children of educated parents and grew up in suburban areas.

[7] Thomas A. Carnicelli, "The Writing Conference: A

One-to-One Conversation," Eight Approaches to Teaching Composition, ed. Tim R. Donovan and Ben W. McClelland (Urbana, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English, 1980), pp. 101-131.

[8] Ibid., p. 103.

[9] This pamphlet is available from NCTE, 1111 Kenyon Road, Urbana, Illinois, 61801. See also Thom Hawkins, "Group Inquiry Techniques for Teaching Writing," College English, 37(7), (March 1976), pp. 637-646. See also Richard Gebhardt, "Teamwork and Feedback: Broadening the Base of Collaborative Writing," College English, 42(1), (September 1980). See also Walter Lamberg, "Self-Provided and Peer-Provided Feedback, " College Composition and Communication, 31, (February 1980), pp. 63-69.

[10] Hillocks, George Jr., "The Interaction of Instruction, Teacher Comment and Revision in Teaching the Composing Process," The Research in the Teaching of English, 16, (1982), pp. 261-277.

IDEAS FOR NEW WAYS TO TEACH ABOUT METAPHOR

Metaphor and symbol are not the concerns of poets only; they pervade veryone's language. But, says Roland Bartel, author of a new book from NCTE, too many of today's English texts discuss these devices only in connection with poetry. In METAPHORS AND SYMBOLS: FORAYS INTO LANGUAGE, Bartel supplies teachers at all levels of education with the background information, examples, sources, and teaching suggestions they need to enlarge their approaches to figurative language and make its significance for every language user more apparent. He gives examples of how metaphor underlie folk expressions, proverbs, riddles, cliches, and slang. He cites reference works on word origins and other storehouses of metaphor for use in teaching, among them books of quotations, writings on slang, and concordances of the Bible. He also discusses humor in metaphor and the sometimes comic effect of mixing metaphors, giving numerous examples and pointing out that here is where laughter can be used to make students more sophisticated language users.

Bartel's discussion of mataphor in poetry offers background for class sessions on the sensory, emotional, and intellectual resonances set up by metaphoric language. Bartel shows how symbols "expand language by subsititution" and acquire connotations through repetition over time. The final chapter explores the significance of metaphor, symbol, and language, noting the ongoing mystery of children's apparently inborn knowledge of broad principles of language.

MERAPHORS AND SYMBOLS: FORAYS INTO LANGUAGE by Roalnd Bartel. 85 pages, paperbound. Price $6.50; NCTE members $5.25. ISBN: 0-8141-3147-6. LC: 83-10623. Available from NCTE, 1111 Kenyon Rd., Urbana, IL 61801. Stock # 31476.

A CASE FOR COMPREHENSIBLE COMPOSITION:

TEACHING THE ESSAY IN 1113

George B. Wittmer

> "Much writing may seem to be of no practical use and just as well left uncomposed, but when one understands writing well, one knows also without explanation the reasons governing order and disorder in the world."
>
> --Kamo Mabuchi, 1741

The importance of the task is unquestionable. The critical assignment of a college faculty is to transmit the value of knowing, regardless of the curricula, to the enrollees. Colleges and universities alone have the special obligation to satisfy the latent hunger to know in the individual members of the unknowing underclassmen. If the hunger is not satisfied, the student's interim years spent at the business end of a red pencil will be for nought; the pleasant interlude of college complete, the student will become a working adult and forget learning permanently. Probably as critical as any course the underclassman will encounter, biology, history, algebra, statistics, computer science, and psychology included, is English 1113, Freshman Composition. Freshman Composition will either put in purposeful order the monumental quantity of primary and secondary school rules of standard expression to which each student has been well exposed, or it will drag witheringly and sleepily through the elemental basics of grammar and simple thought construction until the bell sounds and each student shuffles away.

Without an axis, a determined and definable and logical purpose, the study of composition, more seriously than any other endeavor, will become at best a halting and directionless group memory drill from which the student and the instructor can scarcely wait to escape. There are some particularly sound arguments for the idea that a significant number of freshman English composition programs, with all intent to the contrary, have lost their moorings and have begun drifting into the sad realm of single-

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thought paragraph writing. A consideration of the universal functionality of expository prose, the most logical approach to communicating the purpose of writing, and a prescription for instructional technique should, at the very least, allow each instructor to realize an alternative to the sentence/ paragraph-based freshman composition course.

Expository prose, the act of informative writing, is the stuff of which successful individuals are made. A bright and credible person, because of an inability to execute ordered essays, may fail or fall far below the potential nature made possible for him. The power to express one's belief, position, or theory is a vital facet of respect and audience; no matter in what field of study a student has interest, from fan dancing to forensic medicine, the student must achieve the ability to express himself in an orderly and logical manner to find the most rudimentary success in his field. Expository essays serve the whole person; no one, despite current liberality, will amount to a hill of beans in any accountable life-work without the command of language and the expertise of logic learned through the study of expository prose essays.

The protection of a civilization in wartime depends upon the assumption that every soldier understands the single most important purpose of his armor. The job of aprising a raw recruit of the vital importance in keeping a weapon in spotless condition is particularly difficult. "If the rifle isn't plished," the rookie soldier wonders, "what difference should it make?" It will still fire true, render the enemy limbless, and protect its bearer adequately. The shining barrel and glowing stock will not aid the foxholed private in draining the blood from an enemy of God and democracy. There was, during World War I, an Amish draftee that knew no more of the use of the weapon he was issued than he would have the operation of the Jacquard loom. He was a peculiar case. He had never seen or read or heard a functional description of a gun. This fellow knew only what the glowering sergeant told him: "The barrel must shine; the stock must glow; the firearm must be clean." With the terrible rush for replacements at the western European front, the Amish youth never trained on a firing range or saw a gun fired. The first morning in battle, the Amish boy's throat was opened at knifepoint while he attempted, it was reported, to club the enemy with his loaded Enfield.

In the case of the English composition student, similar critical assumptions cannot be made. Generally the student is absolutely as naive of his sentences' and paragraphs' purpose as the pacifist's son was of a firearm. The study and practice of expository prose must be taught from the understanding that the expression of theme, position, opinion, or belief, and the analytical reporting of defense of that tenet is the ultimate goal of his studies. With such understanding, the study of written language becomes the universal key to success in self expression; without it the confusion and mystery of the coursework compounds.

The notion that a person will be able to assemble effective essays from the study of sentence structure and paragraph styles alone is based on the assumption of the amateur writer's understanding of the essay form and content. Such an assumption is false. There are several composition theorists, among them the faculty of the language arts department at Dartmouth College, who argue the primary content of the first lessons in college-level composition courses should be the components and purpose of the essay, and that the study and practice of expressive sentences and sound paragraphs is the polishing the student's writing should be given in the second half of a two-semester course.

There is little question of the value of the study of writing; the question lies in the consideration and choice of a format of instruction. Many students will never achieve polished, published, pertinent writing, but each of them will be required, in the classroom and after graduation, to perform solid thinking. A strong case can be built for the study of writing approached from the general concept of the essay to the specific skills of building telling sentences and solid paragraphs. Such a study plan would prove beneficial not only to the students, but to the instructors of composition as well. The student can move with understanding into the construction of sentences and paragraphs as part of a larger thought process only if the concept of the essay is clearly and logically presented early on in the initial course of English 1113, Freshman Composition.

UPGRADED EDUCATION COULD AID DEMOCRACY

The new rigor in public school sought by the National Commission on Excellence in Education could go beyond improving students' skills, says Richard Lloyd-Jones of the University of Iowa, newly-elected vice-president of NCTE.

"The first goal of public education," says Lloyd-Jones, "ought to be to help our society to govern itself. To be self-governing, people must have good judgment and be aware of their own beginnings, their own values. These values are generally expressed in the native language, in its literature. If all you know is the language of soap operas or violent TV dramas, you will explain your life in their terms. People who read widely over a long period of time have a great many options for explaining the events around them, and greater possibilities for meaningful lives.

"The main justification for public education has been clouded by by preoccupation with vocational goals and personal gain."

SEMI-COLLABORATION:

TOWARD A PUBLIC "SHOWCASE" OF STUDENT WRITING

James Beck

Are students writing better, at last? *Is* the "New Composition" actually producing improved products amid all the talk of process? I felt accountable to myself, to monitor my students thus. Further, do we really recognize and reward those improved writings as much as we might? I felt appreciative enough of my students' new work to want to do so. But, *how* to highlight the writing act is a problem. English departments lack the galleries of the Arts Center, the science laboratory's displays, the gym's playing fields. Writing remains cloistered.

The solution I tried, and discuss here, is one often recommended, but how often actually done, on a regular and rigorous basis? That is publication of student writing, via simple class anthology. Two years ago, I set myself a challenge thus. Each of my classes in which there was writing, would produce a "showcase" anthology, via ground rules: by semester's end, each student would produce one piece exemplary enough that I could ditto it up for public viewing--future writing students, even my colleagues . . .

A success followed--after stumblings. The showcase gambit does, I feel, help raise quality amid today's miasmic mediocrity. As a difficult target, it focuses efforts, rewards achievement--of student, of teacher. "Showcasing" has helped dynamize the writing experience.

Not without rough spots. My first Showcase made me profoundly rethink the question of teacher intervention/ student responsibility. The just-right amount of "collaboration" between student and teacher becomes a tricky balance.

The problem here is clear. If I "help" too much--if I make the students' writing decisions and corrections for them--I'll only be creating a Teacher's Book. It's even "cheating," since for me, a major goal of teaching writing is student autonomy; their finally writing well *on their own*, not only by *my* rules and proddings and safety-nets. The real writer, the Active Author, demonstrates initiative,

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responsibility, judgment--a mirror opposite of the "Passive Pupil" student so often told what to say, how to say it, whether it's "right." (I know. For years, I over-taught my classes. Once I assigned the course's last paper to be "on your own totally now--your own choice of subject, style," etc. To this students showed an instant hostility, resentment, confusion which branded my course as a sham, the fledglings unable to fly at runway's end after all . . .)

However, too little teacher-collaboration produces a slack and sloppy book indeed. (Years ago, I tried a totally student-determined anthology--"just hand in what you think is your best writing." The diluted and undisciplined results weren't worth the ditto fluid to preserve). An unmonitored anthology has two deficits: (1) students don't learn enough; some teacher-tutoring in revision is needed, they can't become Active Authors overnight; (2) the anthology isn't useful enough, not suitable for Public Viewing by future students let alone faculty (all of whom could opine, "Hey, sloppy mechanics and weak generalizations are okay in Beck's class").

In the middle stands the truly collaborative book, balancing student and teacher responsibilities. That balance is subtle. The key catalyst here is, first, my newly peppered-up attitude: I no longer "hope for" good writing, I expect and require each student's best writing. I push students to correct and improve their Showcase papers on their own, and with peer-editors. I then intervene--but only via counselling their own work, not conducting it myself. (Not "add this here," "move that there," but rather "do specifics really cinch the point here?" "Check your structural logic there.") My ground rules remain rigorous. I may not touch, or touch up, their papers myself, directly. I must filter my intervention through the medium of their own abilities (and motivation too--a problem in the required English class). If the Showcase specimen sparkles, well then, the student succeeded--and I in helping her to do so. If the final product is dim, well we at least played the game, didn't cheat. Going Public is an acid test thus.

In fact, I now see many benefits from requiring a gently-collaborative "showcase" or finally-publishable collection from each English course:

(1) It focuses student effort, of course.

(2) It also aids the teacher, to keep one's best standards up. (It may also aid in certain more candid ways. I don't mean exploitation--"You scribes will divert me with your sparkling little knockout pieces"--but rather a fairness--"I have toiled to teach you these skills, now you will do your own work too." Thus to forestall teacher singe-out).

(3) Showcasing also may aid the total school writing community by reinforcing writing as natural.

(4) It aids future courses and students, if the best Showcase products are funnelled to a Writing Bank or depot of exemplary work, as models.

(5) And it may help untarnish the really dismally negative image of writing in general, and student writing in particular, which too many students (and teachers) still hold.

Hearing of my Showcase project, an aghast colleague exclaimed, "You want to collect and publish student themes? I don't want to read any more of them!" I could only agree. I haven't permitted "student themes"--the phoney proclaiming of derivative platitudes to no real reader--for years. Good student writing is something else again: authentic, effective statements by novice, emerging writers are usually a satisfaction, occasionally even a privilege, to read.

All fine, but how to implement the ideal, bake this pie-in-the-sky? Following are the ground rules for my first Showcase. (Then I'll note which I had to alter--slightly--in re student/teacher "collaboration").

(1) In the course's last week, each student selects the one paper, already written, that's best for showcasing her best writing as such, regardless of subject, purpose, style, audience.

(2) Then the student recasts the piece, applying the course skills on her own, guided only by the general shaping-comments I made on the paper when grading.

(3) In recasting, the writer also distills. My Showcases have a rigorous length limit: never more than one page, typed single-spaced, in two columns (each 10" by 3½"); about 400 words. And ideally, only one of these columns. A procrustean truncation? Not a bit of it! After being drilled in how to puncture nine separate kinds of wordiness, my students usually can recast their essence into that cameo compass. Less Is More anyhow.

(4) Students then present their polished version--camera-ready (typed with a dark ribbon, clean keys, and absolutely error-free).

(5) The final step, depends. If the class was laggard and balky, I may just grade and file their efforts. Livelier classes do appreciate my thermofaxing up the writings (no real paper drain--with a one-column limit, one piece of paper can accommodate four students). The class can simply keep the resulting booklet as souvenir, or write written responses for authors. I can also, of course,

excerpt samples for departmental bulletin-board "paper of the week," and share with colleagues (we're just learning how to do this, without competitiveness or apprehension). I must in any case extract the cream of the crop for my "Golden Gallery," a superbowl showcase conserving the best writings over the semesters. In all these ways, broadcasting writing, affirming its natural worthiness; showcasing seems so natural now. Why did I wait so long to do it?

Maybe one has to peruse a successfully-completed Showcase--warts and all--to fully appreciate the experience. Here are my recollections of that moment, which taught me to balance student/teacher collaboration more carefully--but which also affirmed the still-overlooked rewards of teaching composition today.

Semester's end. A snowy December afternoon in my office in the deserted classroom building. I held in my hand the Showcase--25 pages, 100 students (four columns per sheet). An achievement; but a drain on my semester's energies. Was it worth it? I page through the assembled book with a leisurely perspective for the first time. My reactions will be diverse:

(1) First, of course, bad news--one sees the mechanical gaffes and glitches. Kurt K., how could you leave such run-ons, fragments, misspellings in your letter-to-the-editor about foreign aid? You've torpedoed your piece; I can't exhibit it.

(2) Still, good news--there's very little stilted, phoney "Engfish" (though such traditional Themetalk riddled fully 80% of the semester's first papers). Only one of the hundred fumbled back into fakery--Pat L. never did get beyond trotting out inanities on "media bias." Mainly, however, any Tired Topics now have an authentic angle. Laura B. on "Handguns? If So, Think About This," speaks freshly. Dave B. in "Strike Out," laments the NFL football strike with a calm integrity. Karen G.'s "Your Dutiful Daughter," letter to over-directive parents, brings off this threadbare subject with rock-bottom, quiet intensity for once. Alas, however--I see that Jan C. fails after all; a good adult writer, she showcased "Parents, Children, and TV"--a thin argument, lacking specific experiences with her children (even after all the course's drilling in detailing).

(3) If no Engfish, what of a second type of problem-writing, the "sloppy personal" piece, the unchallenging tape-recording of My Summer Vacation? Good news here: I see few examples of those blurtings which disfigured my too-informal anthology of years ago, "Oreo Connection," "The Great Bear Scare," "And It Was All Just A Dream." Good riddance to such popped-off reveries and truisms serving neither writer nor reader, which give "personal" writing a bad name.

Still, a few have slipped in. Paul P., why did you have to showcase "Vending Machines Tick Me Off," humorous but below your rich experience as a store detective (which our three conferences finally made sense of?) Steve C., why your personal paragraph "My Aching Self," chronicling multiple athletic bruises of a weekend, instead of one of your varied pieces about machine shop work? Guy M., why your vignette "Deer Archer Hunting," instead of telling us non-psychologists about "attribution." I know why these failings. Most students prefer their own personal favorites, and also, shirk the more challenging if worthwhile subjects.

(4) I next notice length--of tightening wordiness down to 250 words, one column. Here, more sloppiness regrettably emerges. Many are over-trimmed to skimpy half-columns. Alas, Sandy S., why did you reduce your "Big Bucks" insider-to-outsider revelation about working as a bank teller, to bare bones? You gutted those lively anecdotes about coin collectors and robbers. So also John B. on "Right-Brain Thinking for Executives"--you slashed necessary explanation.

(5) Then, there's sheer style--sometimes polished, sometimes left roughshod in syntax, flow, structure. The authors of some jerky specimens obviously never read their drafts aloud. Jeff F., your letter about campus maintenance is specific, and well toned, at last--but your stumbly syntax affirms that your mid-semester slump was indeed terminal.

(6) But enough carping. The good material soon emerges-- a lot of it, too. I spot many "Golden Gallery" candidates which future students will enjoy. (And which I'll re-read privately myself, replaying these records just to savor how these pieces unfold material unfamiliar to a distant reader, in clear sequence, with near-perfect pace, tone, and detailing too. Writing as a performing art indeed . . . But of course "student themes are always ghastly to read and students never improve").

The winner's circle includes Jeff P.,'s "Precipitation," a slice-of-life sketch powerfully understating a young mother's frustrations--showing, not sermonizing. In "Hardly Working," Mark B. grasps the realities of a clothing clerk's job with similar suave ease--a classic. Pete W.'s "Individuality Happens," sportively depicts his remaking of an antique car into a land-yacht--his real subject, self-identity. These pieces work. Well worth conserving, they seem indigenous literature themselves, the first exemplars of a genre of "valid student writing" which emerges volcanic like Surtsev from the sea.

A few of the best pieces were deft from the start, not needing my instruction. Here belong Diane S.'s light-humor vignette on moving, "Christmas in August," also Jeanne S.'s "Reasons for Leaving," an exploration-piece by a returning student. And Linda D.'s evocative compare-contrast piece, "Lima, WI and Houston, TX." And Anne T.'s sprightly metaphor viewing a multi-child household as a military campaign.

(7) But another category of writings is better than readers can know. These are the *heavily-revised* pieces, the true products of process. Cathy P.'s "Excuses, Excuses," a light lucid essay about children returning home late, emerged from musclebound officialese which, to her credit, Cathy herself trimmed away, when I alerted her to it. So also Chris G.'s essay exploring "Parental Relations" stepped forth from a tangled jumble of pre-writing he and I discussed (even though, I see, he *did* sidestep his ultimate point toward which his discovery-drafts were forcing him: just how selfish was he really?) Brad E.'s letter to a senator about student aid now burns clean, with tight structure, convincing specifics, correct tone. I well know its earlier, chaotic drafts. Chris F.'s aware-and-alert piece about problems with physicians was originally four pages of writer-centered rambling. After the wordiness unit, Chris chipped it down herself. Another of Chris' papers, "The Joy of Animals," is now a compact summary-overview, truly "all about" house pets for the novice reader. I merely mentioned structural problems in her first draft; she realigned them herself.

(8) Oddly more satisfying are certain other pieces, seemingly ordinary, actually whopping achievements. These are trophies of the quiet bloomers, those students who entered with little skill and much anxiety, but who themselves faced the virgin page and learned to shape chaos. These covert triumphs include Jean S.'s modest service-piece explaining "How to Escape One's Dormitory Contract." I made her re-do and re-see again, to butterfly a graceful draft out of grubby, obscure drafts. She did it, put her points in order, added key information which she had omitted. Mary B., who hated and feared the course at first ("It's all so vague"), ended with a bravado piece "Dear Miss Hansen," coolly condemning spoon-feeding in traditional education. The star here is Rick C., a remedial type. "Bessie vs. the Brookie" is his modest newspaper letter urging local farmers to protect trout streams. Behind its still-marginal syntax lie five full drafts of quietly-dedicated working-through, Rick making his own decisions, facing his problems with my help, not my takeover. I applaud his ilk.

(9) I even see that most of the course's *near-losers* have come through. Hulky Steve R., who tried to jolly and joke his way through with incredibly-thin propaganda about the R.O.T.C., finally crafted off a suave protest-piece, "Sister Cindy Wronged," showing how students mistreated a religious speaker. Eric R., who sat through the term stubbly, static, and sullen, did produce "A Deer Father," a solid piece about father-son hunting. And Terri R., an epitome of mascaraed vacuity, finally quit ventilating pop psychology and sketched a marvellously-understated vignette, "My Father

and the TV," which actually will make it into the Golden Gallery.

Amid noiseless snowfall, I closed the book. Pondering its imperfect but still impressive achievements, I wondered how anybody nowadays can still feel--as many still do--that "teaching composition is a fruitless chore; students never find any real content, and never really improve their style." (Or that "personal writing, expressing the self, is undisciplined, egocentric, not educational.") How far these student-writers have come since those earlier semesters of perplexity, and this semester's early arthritic "themes." How far they've come on their own. Yet, with much secondary effort on my part. Too much effort! Will I do it again? Accepting the Showcase challenge requires gobs of energy, to watch and monitor and shape from the sidelines; I'm aware of chances the writers shouldn't miss. I think: Maybe I'll let it go for a semester; just assign papers, period. But even then, I know that I won't . . .

One way to showcase with sanity is to smooth the procedure. Here's what my own showcasing has taught me to do, and to avoid:

(1) Choice of subject matter, type of writing.
I shall leave these to the students; this makes for better individual pieces, a richer anthology overall. However, I now do positively require significant subject matter and a rhetorically challenging purpose.

(2) Choice of paper for showcasing.
Now, I also monitor their selections, to avoid the personal reveries pleasing to writer--but not challenging or rewarding to reader.

(3) Responses to Drafts: Teacher.
I now do intervene more, requiring (but not performing!) further, specific revisions if needed to bring up to final, going-public quality.

Responses: Student.
I also now schedule peer-editing workshops, help students' own efforts.

(4) Timing.
Now showcases are due Week #12, not at semester's end. This allows polishing time.

(5) Length.
I don't announce that rigorous 250-word limit until late, just before the showcase. (Otherwise, some students do crimp their first drafts, avoid producing an abundance from which to dis-

> till richly). Also I relax the limit occasionally, but not often, and allow two columns. (Otherwise a few papers would suffer unduly. But not many; better to keep the lid on length).

In general, I collaborate and control a bit more--but never doing the students' own work ("cheating" would besmirch the whole enterprise). Leaving it all up to the student does make for a classic acid test; but a balanced guidance helps each student to learn the most specific skills, and also to produce publicly-usable pieces.

Note other possible formats or modes of showcasing work. (1) Number of papers: Advanced Composition classes owe not one but three. (2) Published responses to papers: One time I printed varying "teacher, author, and peer-reader comments" alongside each column. (3) Special-issue anthologies, all on one theme or type of writing: a garland of "letters of argument," or "scene-descriptions," or "best response to literature," or "best essay on a Tired Topic such as automobiles, families, food." (4) "Dual Sets": two one-column papers, by same writer, on same subject--but varied, as to audience, or purpose for writing, or styles (formal, and "wild"). This shows how style must vary in varied occasions. (5) Processual Anthology. One time, I printed three pieces from each student: the "final best" showcase, also the "first or worst" piece in the course, plus the one page of the drafting, the pre- or rewriting, from any paper, which showed the force of vision-and-revision in its actual process.

And so on; to what limit? Every English course, composition and literature, having its own Showcase? Every course in other fields too at last? "Faculty Forums," mutually critiquing our own essays--teachers actually writing!--and dittoing them up once a semester? Work posted on bulletin boards, the "Writing of the Week?" An all-school Review of good writing by students--and faculty? Joggers carrying notepads; dinner party guests pausing to scribble on napkins? The world at pen in the morning? . . .

THE ELEVEN FUNCTIONS OF REVISION

Carolyn Boiarsky

When Joe Cummings, the former Atlanta Bureau Chief for Newsweek magazine, admitted that he had difficulty with transitions, I felt relieved. Transitions have been a stumbling block in my writing also. I've spent as much as an hour staring at the same two paragraphs, trying to figure out a way to tie them together effectively without using such commonplace connectives as "therefore," "then," and "also." But I have always felt that my problem was evidence of my own incompetence; I hadn't realized that it was a common one among writers.

Joe and I, both professional writers, had been unaware that the amount and kinds of work in which we engaged in revising our writing were representative of that done by most writers and not an eccentric trait, indicative of our own ineffectiveness. No wonder so many teachers are often even less aware of what occurs during the revision process. Yet, without fully understanding the process, teachers are constrained from helping students revise their writing as effectively as they might. For this reason I decided to study what professional writers try to do when they revise. I wanted to determine what specific changes a writer makes to turn the incoherent babbling of a first draft into a logically organized, syntactically mature, and imaginative piece. To discover this process, I decided to investigate the specific functions a writer's revisions serve within the context of a piece of writing.

Previous studies in revision have concentrated on the syntactic units involved (Bridwell, 1980; Sommers, 1980). However, these units did not appear appropriate for my study of the functions of revision. These units are simply the pieces which the writer manipulates to communicate an idea; they are analogous to the pieces on a chessboard which a player manipulates to win a game. Revisions are made in terms of the whole idea rather than the syntactic elements comprising it, just as the chess pieces are moved in terms of a broad strategy rather than because of their individual properties. The purpose of revision is not to change a syntactic unit, whether it is the word or the paragraph, but rather to clarify an idea.

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A second problem with using syntactic units as criteria for studying revision is that the same syntactic unit can serve several functions. For example, a sentence can be deleted because it repeats information already presented in a previous sentence and is, therefore, unnecessary, or it can be deleted because it belongs in a different paragraph or because it should have been combined with another sentence in a subordinated form, such as a phrase. Thus, a single syntactic unit, the sentence, can be deleted for three different purposes: (1) to delete information; (2) to reorganize information; and (3) to subordinate an idea.

I decided, therefore, to use a deductive approach--to determine what was happening to the piece of writing as it was being revised and then, if possible, to derive categories from these observations. Sommers identified four such categories: addition, deletion, substitution, and reordering, which she correlated with syntactic units in her study. However, these appeared to be limited and insufficient to cover such problems as inappropriate voice or inability to relate various concepts. These problems are likely to require complex changes involving style and angle respectively. In addition, Sommers' four categories appear to be more concerned with how the writer makes a change--by adding, deleting, substituting or reordering--than with why the writer makes a change.

I selected for study a 1,500 word article in the conative transactional mode (Britton, 1979). I had written the article only a month ago and all of the drafts, from the first to the final published version, still existed. Since the article had been written recently, I could remember fairly well the reasons for the various changes. In addition, I felt that because the article was a piece of expository discourse, it was representative of the kind of writing expected in freshman composition. I reviewed every revision on each draft to determine (1) the function which the revision served, i.e. to reorganize information, to clean up; and (2) the specific change made, i.e. a word crossed out, a paragraph moved. I then attempted to categorize the functions. They appeared to fall into eleven categories:

1. *Altering Form*: Changing tone, voice, point-of-view, person, style.
2. *Organizing Information*: Reorganizing ideas, sections, paragraphs, sentences, words.
3. *Creating Transitions*: Connecting ideas, sections, paragraphs, sentences, words.
4. *Deleting Information*: Removing ideas, arguments, descriptions, sections, paragraphs, sentences, words.

5. *Expanding Information*: Adding ideas, arguments, descriptions, sections, paragraphs, sentences, words.
6. *Emphasizing Ideas*: Reorganizing sections, paragraphs, sentences, words; changing syntactic structures.
7. *Subordinating Ideas*: Reorganizing sections, paragraphs, sentences; changing syntactic structures.
8. *Creating Immediacy*: Using direct quotes, first- or second-person, participles; changing tense, voice; expanding description.
9. *Improving Syntactic Structures*: Changing sentence, clause, and phrase patterns; changing prosodic patterns.
10. *Improving Language Usage*: Changing words, metaphors, similes, parallel construction, other rhetorical devices.
11. *Cleaning Up*: Correcting grammar, punctuation, capitalization, word usage, spelling, graphic representation.

(This is only a partial list of the types of changes which can serve each function. Other syntactical and rhetorical alterations can be made within each category).

To determine whether or not these categories were applicable to other pieces of writing, I examined drafts from a variety of other works which I had written during the past year. These included such diverse forms as instructional material, business letters, a research proposal, and several magazine articles. Not every piece required revisions in each of the eleven categories; i.e., the research proposal did not require revision under altering form, but all revisions appeared to fit into the eleven categories. Also each category was represented by a revision in at least one of the pieces studied beyond the original article.

It was also necessary to determine whether these categories would be relevant for other writers and I studied the drafts of several other writers[1] and then discussed their revisions with them. Their writing included works in the poetic as well as the transactional mode. These drafts and my discussions with the authors concerning their revisions indicated that the revisions in which they engaged encompassed the eleven categories. Though there were differences concerning those areas the writers considered to be of the most concern and taking the most time, the authors suggested no additions or deletions to the eleven categories.

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[1] Joe Cummings; Katie Baer, Editor of the Hospital Infection Control Newsletter; Juliet Zimmerman, Medical Writer for Booz-Allen and Hamilton; George Chambers, poet (The Bonnyclabber) and novelist (Null Set and Other Stories).

These categories are not linear but recursive as Murray suggests (1968). The writer moves in and out of them, a change in organization often signalling a need for a transition which in turn may create a need to subordinate an idea which triggers a change in syntactic structures, not only in the particular sentence affected, but in the following one also. In addition, there is no specific time during the writing process when each of the various revisions occurs. Some are made as early as the pre-writing stage (Murray, 1978), while others occur during in-process drafting and still others between drafts (Flower, 1977). Nor can these categories be ranked according to their importance, since each is necessary for a piece of writing to be effective. A piece which is mechanically perfect but doesn't work because the tone is inappropriate is as much a failure as a piece which works but which is rendered confusing or choppy by inaccurate grammar or punctuation.

It is important that these eleven categories of revision functions should not be considered prescriptive. They are not rubrics for how a writer should revise. Rather they are descriptive, describing the functions which certain revisions serve in solving problems and strengthening aspects inherent in a piece of written discourse. The writer must analyze his or her writing and then determine from among alternatives what must be done to solve the existing problems and to strengthen the work. It is within this context of a problem solving approach that a hierarchy among the categories exists. A writer needs to solve the problem of making a piece work, before attempting to solve a problem of poor transitions. Because the solution for a piece which doesn't work is often to alter some aspect associated with the piece's form, revisions within the category of altering form take precedence over revisions serving other functions.

Though the eleven categories describe solution to problems within a piece of writing, there is not a one-to-one correspondence between a problem and a specific solution. A writer may diagnose the problem as a lack of coherence, but must then determine in which of several alternative solutions to engage to create a coherent piece. The solution may be as complicated as creating an entirely new angle around which to develop the piece or as simple as creating transitions to hold the major sections of the piece together.

While the revisions of professional writers are encompassed in those eleven categories, students' revisions, in the main, appear to be concentrated only in the last two categories. In the National Assessment of Educational Progress (1977), Sommers and Bridwell found that students spend most of their time on "surface" level revisions--changes in single words, in vocabulary and grammar--and they engage in most of these during in-process drafting. The "deeper" levels, which involve changes in large syntactic units, including paragraphs and the entire theme, and which are often done between drafts, are seldom considered by the majority of students. Yet, when they are considered and carried out between drafts, there is a positive correlation with their ratings, according to Bridwell.

Though Bridwell is concerned with the syntactic units being revised rather than with the functions, there appears to be a direct correlation between the two. Two of the functions, improving language usage and cleaning up, require changes mainly in a single word, the lowest syntactic level, and a third category, improving syntactic structures, is limited to the sentence. All of the other functions, which involve "deeper" levels, often require changes in the larger units, which range from a paragraph to an entire section composed of several thousand words and numerous paragraphs.

Sommers suggests that students spend time on the small syntactic units because they see words as the units of written discourse. I suggest, however, that the reason students rely mainly on the small units, which fall largely into the three surface-level categories, is the writing instruction. The assignments themselves often eliminate the need to revise in such categories as altering form and organizing information. In addition, teachers have spent little time, either in their teaching or in their assessment of writing proficiency, considering aspects of these other categories, which often require the manipulation of the larger syntactic units.

Many of the assignments in both secondary English classes, especially those concerned with college preparation, and freshman composition courses imply that the audience is the teacher and the purpose is a grade. Thus, the students are seldom faced with the problem of revising their papers in terms of altering form because according to their perceptions, the audience and the purpose seldom change. In these situations, students often try to "psych out" the style--including the tone, format, and point of view--which they believe the instructor wants and then use it for most of their assignments. Students need to be able to write for a variety of audiences and purposes if they are to learn how to manipulate such aspects as voice and person. Assignments, especially at the secondary school level, which are written in relation to some of the older textbooks, also usually imply the use of the five paragraph theme format. By adapting this single organizational format for much of their expository discourse, students avoid the possibility of writing a disorganized piece which would require them to reorganize the material during revision. Students need to be made aware of the variety of organizational structures which professional writers use and encouraged to experiment with various formats if they are to learn to select from among them the one which best presents the content for a particular piece (Boiarsky, 1982). (See sample for assignments which necessitate revision).

But changes in assignments need to be accompanied by an expansion in the repertoire of composition skills which an instructor teaches and assesses. Traditionally, instructors have emphasized the areas of vocabulary and mechanics, both in their teaching and in their assessment of writing, and have spent comparatively little time, if any, on the other categories (Sommers, 1981). Beginning with the primary grades and continuing through college composition courses, students are taught punctuation, usage, vocabulary, and spelling, and it is in these areas that they are often required to "revise" in terms of "correct." Until all eleven of the categories are emphasized, until all other aspects of written discourse, such as prosody, logical thinking, and the relationship of content to structure, are taught and assessed, students will continue to concentrate only on the "lower" levels.

By becoming aware of the other, larger areas involved in revision, students can begin to resolve their writing problems satisfactorily. Sommers (1980) contends that "students sense something larger than moving words around needs to be done to fix their writing," but they don't know what it is. What it is can be found in those other categories. And once students recognize that their problems lie beyond punctuation and language usage, they can begin to develop a set of strategies for solving them. Flanagan (1980) suggests a set of strategies and Donald Graves (1979) finds that, when students approach revision with a problem orientation, they will engage in major revision activities.

The need to approach writing with a problem orientation is the key to helping students engage in major revision activities. We, as teachers, need to regard students' drafts with a problem orientation, rather than with what Sommers calls a "rigid rule" approach. We need to look at the draft to discover what is wrong with it, rather than what rules have been broken, and then we need to help the student resolve the problem. If we are to do this successfully, we will have to look beyond errors in language usage, vocabulary, and the mechanics. We will have to consider such areas as syntactic rhythm, immediacy, and emphasis. We will have to determine what functions students' revision must serve if they are to resolve the problems in their various pieces of discourse.

To provide students with this type of help effectively, we will need to change the content of our feedback to students during conferences and on their papers. We will need to take the time to analyze a piece, to determine what the student is trying to say, if it has been said, and, if not, why not. To do this, our responses must be text-specific. We must talk in terms of the specific relationship which exists between the content and style and the projected audience and purpose of the piece.

We need to provide students with the kinds of assignments which both necessitate and motivate them to engage in major revision activities. And we need to help them approach revision with a problem orientation and to provide them with relevant feedback for helping them solve their problems. If we can meet these needs, then our students will begin to recognize all of the functions which revisions serve and they will begin to make effective revisions to improve their written discourse.

SAMPLE ASSIGNMENTS

1. The following assignments should be made consecutively. They require the students to write (1) for different audiences, i.e. for their peers for assignment "a" and for an adult lay audience for assignment "b"; (2) for different purposes, i.e. to persuade in assignment "a" and to inform in assignment "b"; and (3) in different modes, i.e. in the persuasive mode in assignment "a" and in the expository mode in assignment "b".

   a. Write an editorial for the student newspaper arguing for or against President Reagan's proposed cuts in student loans.

   b. Write a feature article for the Sunday magazine of the local newspaper discussing the pros and cons of President Reagan's proposed cuts in student loans.

2. The following assignments should be made consecutively during the same class period. They will require students to adapt different points of view which in turn may require students to use different voices and different organizational formats.

   a. Write the introductory paragraph for an analysis of the (article, book, TV show, movie) you have just (read, seen). Then make an informal outline of the remainder of your analysis.

b. Write a different introductory paragraph for the same article, etc., but one which views the article, etc. from a different angle. Then make an informal outline of the remainder of your analysis.

c. Write a third introductory paragraph for the same article, etc., again, using an angle which differs from the other two and make a third informal outline of the remainder of the analysis.

d. Select two of the three to complete for the following week.

Both of these assignments should be followed by discussion periods to discuss how the different treatments of the same subject required different points of view, modes, voices, and organizational formats.

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COMMUNICATION ART, WRITING CRAFT, AND AUDIENCE RESPONSE

Alma A. Ilacqua

College students sometimes suffer acute embarrassment when professors cite instances of flawed grammar, spelling, and mechanics in compositions. They feel (and rightly!) that after twelve years of education, they should have acquired control of the basics. Therefore they hasten to correct readily identifiable "elementary" errors. However the same students who wax apologetic over misspelled words, misused commas, or misplaced parts often will resist revising to correct subtler and far more insidious writing flaws. Writers who flush over failure to make a pronoun agree with its antecedent in gender and number are apt of scoff at the idea of rephrasing to remove a general or ambiguous reference or rewriting to strengthen vague introductions, faulty organization, inadequate development, and weak conclusions. "What's the difference?" they demur. "You know what I mean." They fail to see that "the difference" is precisely the point, that most readers in fact may NOT know what they mean. Although teachers are an experienced and intuitive lot who generally can make sense out of student ambiguities and abstractions, writers should not expect readers (including teachers!) to struggle through mazes of tortured language and structure in order to get at meaning.

Even the most conscientious students often balk at rewriting to remove bombast and pompous rhetoric. "It says what I mean," they protest, affronted. When challenged to explain what they "mean" they often cannot comply. After mentioning a number of tangential ideas and talking around the subject for several sentences, they sometimes sheepishly admit that they are not quite certain what they mean, after all. Occasionally, they present an idea so totally different from the one implied in the garbled passages that they surprise themselves with the discrepancy between intended and actual messages. Frequently they discover that the original paragraphs touch only peripherally on the real substance of their meaning. At this point they either admit that their idea is too hazy to be workable and they determine to search for a more viable one, or they retreat to work on restating the topic more simply and clearly.

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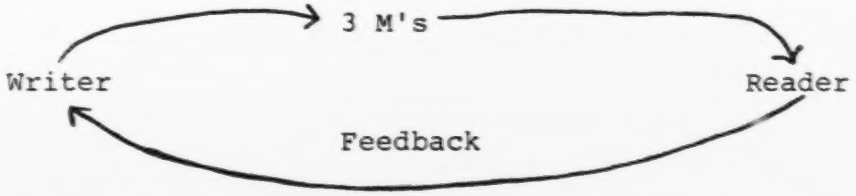
Sometimes students attempt to justify gobbledygook by trying to shift the blame to the teacher. "But you told me that my writing was pedestrian and that I should try to increase my vocabulary," they observe, assuming an injured or ingenuous air. They conveniently forget previous lectures showing how pretentious writing weakens communication. After being reminded of earlier lessons incorporating Chase's classic essay, Cross's recent book, and Gardner's prolix proverbs,[1] they grudgingly admit their overblown prose needs editing to give it restraint and clarity.

Sometimes resistance is due to honest inability to be objective, a problem faced by all writers, be they professionals or neophytes. Most practicing writers know that the secret of good writing lies in rewriting. They have learned techniques of distancing in order to approach revisions objectively. They have acquired control of their craft, and are accustomed to thinking in terms of intended readership. New writers, on the other hand, seem ever to view first drafts as deathless prose. They cannot bear to reassess a single idea or rephrase even one sentence. Many lack control of the basic tools of writing. They have a nodding acquaintance with such grammatical concepts as parallelism and point of view, but they are total strangers to the less-tangible elements of unity and coherence. Even when they find a workable idea, most lack the feel for language and structure which lets them see the difference between writing which clearly and interestingly transmits a significant message and work that actually obstructs communication. Enchanted by their own topics, whether important or trivial, and enmeshed in their own verbiage, they tend to ignore audiences entirely and to express themselves in limbo.

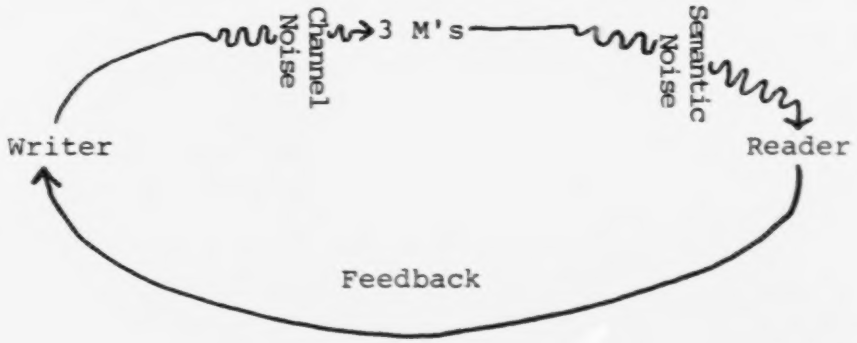
Brought up to view writing as self-expression, students often must undergo retraining which emphasizes the fact that all writing is communication. They must perceive that, although both writer and message are important, no writing is significant until it reaches and affects an intended audience.[2] They must recognize that responsibility for making the message comprehensible rests with the sender.[3] They may engage in cryptic, disorganized, and ungrammatical writing in intrapersonal communications like diary or journal entries. However, since the bulk of writing is interpersonal or essentially public, students must become more reader-oriented. They must realize that because writer and reader generally do not share a common storehouse of information, sending a message along a selected channel to an intended audience in anticipation of a specific response is far more demanding than communicating with one's self.

If communication is the act of transmitting information, ideas, and attitudes from one person to another,[4] then in order properly to appreciate all that the "act" involves, students must acquire an understanding of the entire communication cycle. They must realize that communication is an *art* whose successful pursuit includes (but is not limited to) total control of the *craft* of writing. They must consider both "act" and "art" as a *process* involving *sender*, *message*, *method*, *medium* or *channel*, *receiver*, and *feedback*.[5]

In order to understand the process, they should learn that the *sender* is the writer (as opposed to speaker, actor, or encoder); the *message* is the writer's topic and intended purpose; the *method* is the control of writing craft (form, structure, grammar, and mechanics); the *medium* or *channel* is written language (as opposed to spoken language, computer code, or other symbols); the *receiver* is the reader (as opposed to the listener, viewer, or decoder); and the *feedback* is reader response. They should realize that in practice message and medium-channel are virtually inseparable, a fact often noted by Marshall McLuhan. They should perceive that method, which implies knowledge and control of the *craft* of writing, is so much a part of message that it ought to be viewed as a dimension of message rather than considered separately. They may then be able to visualize a communication cycle which, like the diagram below, includes Writer, the three M's of Message/Method/Medium-channel, Reader, and Feedback.



For a fuller comprehension of the process, they also should know that the communication cycle is incomplete without inclusion of two types of interference, "channel noise" and "semantic noise."[6] (See the figure below). As writers, they are responsible for anticipating and overcoming both the mechanical problems in the channel itself and the perceptual difficulties of the audience.



Since "channel noise" in the print medium refers to hard-to-read copy, writers can avoid problems by substituting hand-printing or typescript for indecipherable cursive writing, by using a good grade of opaque paper rather than transparent onionskin, and by keeping typewriters in good repair. If students wisely stretch the term to include distortions or "static" generated by misplaced punctuation, misspelled words, and misused grammar, they can avert such difficulties by proofreading carefully and consulting dictionary and handbook regularly. Knowing that "semantic noise" refers to the subtler and more sophisticated problems of language, meaning, and perception, writers should plan carefully to compensate for these more challenging obstacles. They should realize that language levels differ according to the chronological, mental, and educational ages of the readers. When emphasizing unfamiliar or difficult terms, they should substitute or add better-known synonyms either in the same or in subsequent sentences.

Even when observing appropriate levels of language, writers should realize that the words themselves may have varying connotations, depending on the audience's frames of reference, a phenomenon psychologists and communicators identify as "selective perception."[7] To a Floridian or Californian, allusions to severe cold and deep snow may bring visions of thirty-two-degree temperatures and two-to-three-inch snowfalls. To an inhabitant of western or northern New York state, similar vague references to thermometer readings and precipitation may imply sub-zero temperatures and twelve-foot drifts. For some audiences, "beachcomber" may evoke images of a healthful outdoor existence unhampered by the meaningless conventions of regulations of a repressive society; for others the term may be equated with shiftlessness and laziness. Only by careful definition, repetition, and exemplification can students successfully circumvent the "semantic noise" introduced by readers' expectations, experiences, and stereotypes.

Similar problems can arise if writers employ "loaded" words which carry strong emotional overtones. Thus honest writers should avoid using "purr" words like "justice" and "brotherhood" unless they clearly attach specific meanings to these words, in context. Similarly, they should abjure "snarl" words, like most slang references to ethnic origins and other pejorative labels. They should also avoid the deliberate use of propaganda tactics such as card-stacking (the one-sided argument), band-wagon (exaggerated claims regarding support for a cause), testimonials (citing as authorities persons whose qualifications have little or no relation to the subject under discussion), and bifurcation (claiming only two extreme courses of action, when several alternatives are available).

Unfortunately, student sensitivity to both the craft of writing and the art of communication which subsumes it is only slightly heightened by readings, diagrams, and lectures. Consciousness of reader response is minimally affected by critiques from the teacher. To acquire the retraining that is necessary to change students from self- to audience-directed writers, they must participate fully in the communication process. Only seeing the Writer, Message/Method/Medium-channel, Audience, Feedback cycle in operation can they truly appreciate all the ramifications of the art of communication.

One very successful method of convincing students of the worth of the audience-response approach to writing is to involve them in the working laboratory situation.[9] In preparation for the workshop experience, students receive orientation lectures and reading assignments on writing principles and communication theory. Early in the course they explore various writing topics and prospective audiences. They have access to a variety of library reserve sources for article ideas and markets.[10] They begin to build an idea file from news clippings and specific reporting assignments, they prepare a "future book" based on standing holidays and anniversaries and on anticipated campus and community events. They learn to address their messages to a target audience with which they have become fairly well-acquainted through the ploy of being required to write for specific magazines. After numerous "brainstorming" sessions in class and in private conferences, they decide upon an article idea, match it to their specific audience and magazine, and start writing the first of several versions of their major full-length manuscript.

Together we work out a viable system of first, second, and final drafts for manuscripts. Fellow students, who have been informed by the writer regarding prospective market and readership, function as "audience" and provide immediate feedback. Following dialogue or "feedback" in both directions, writers continue rewriting until their messages achieve the intended response from the peer audience which has assumed the role of the writer's target audience. At the end of the semester they send the finished article to the initially-selected publication. Indeed when students hand in their final drafts, they are required to use the proper format for manuscript submission and to include stamped, addressed forwarding and return envelopes.

Student readers are hard task-masters, constantly challenging writers to organize their material, use language more precisely, and put what they "mean" not only in comprehensible but in interesting form. Often they are unaware of how many of the basic principles of writing they are learning and putting into practice. They talk about getting a better focus, dropping material that "doesn't belong," correcting "choppiness," playing this or that idea "up" or "down," fixing "funny-sounding" phrases or needing a "for instance." Although they rarely use the appropriate terms, especially at first, they are really demanding a clearer thesis, better unity, greater coherence, stronger emphasis, idiomatic expressions, and more definitions and examples.

Judging from my own observations, from students' success in publishing manuscripts prepared in partial fulfillment of my course requirements, and from feedback supplied by former students, the laboratory method which focuses on the total communication cycle really works. Students learn to order their ideas, to "package" them attractively, to transmit them to an intended audience, and to achieve a desirable response. They learn to apply the advertiser's AIDA formula (Attention, Interest, Desire, Action) to their own writing. In other words they strive not so much for self-expression alone (although that is always part of writing) but for successful communication as evidenced by appropriate audience-response.

Following are three drafts of a manuscript produced in a recent writing course. A comparison of the various versions dramatically illustrates the importance of rewriting in terms of intended readership. Initially the manuscript revealed varying levels of creativity, yet needed work to shpae and strengthen it. After exposure to audience response in workshop, and following rewriting, feedback, dialogue, and further polishing, it passed the test not only of peer critics but of professionals: it has already been published.

SHOPLIFTING

Is a Crime

by Patricia L. McCarthy

Lisa eyed the sparkling necklace. The tag on it was $3.50. She shifted her glance around the jewelry department. The store was crowded and the salesgirl was busy with another customer. Lisa thought to herself, "No one will notice a little necklance. It's such a big store, they have lots of money."

Lisa knew her friends did it all the time, but still she was worried, what if she got caught? She knew she had the crisp $10 dollar bill from her sixteenth birthday. She figured that she had spent so much money in the store before that she was justified in helping herself--just this once. Besides, if all her other friends were able to get away with it, why shouldn't she be able to.

"They'll never notice" and with that thought Lisa turned, knocked the necklace off the rack with her coat sleeve, and then stopped to tie her shoe. She slipped the necklace into her shoe, stood up and walked away with a feeling of ecstatic accomplishment.

The feeling didn't last too long. Lisa was unaware of the plainclothed security guard watching Lisa help herself. The guard talked into the tiny microphone that was hidden in her collar. She alerted another guard who was standing by the door. Just as Lisa stepped outside the store, the security guard walked over to her and tapped her on the shoulder.

"Excuse me miss, but would you please come with me. I'm the store security and I'd like to have a word with you."

Lisa was astonished and filled with a feeling of dread at the same time. "What's wrong, I didn't do anything!" she blurted out.

"If you'd please come with me, I'm sure we can straighten this out quickly," replied the guard.

Lisa looked around at the people staring at her as if she was a common criminal.

"But I didn't do anything. I have to go meet my friends--"

"Do you know your rights?"

"What--I . . ."

"You have the right to remain silent . . ."

Lisa couldn't believe this was happening. She was being arrested! Oh, my God, what are my parents going to say--I can't believe this, she thought to herself.

" . . . can and will be used against you in a court of . . ."

Everyone was looking at her. The tears were streaming down her face by this time.

"Do you understand these rights?"

Lisa nodded her head slowly between sniffles.

She was taken to the security offices. On her way down the dimly lit hallway she passed another young girl of about twelve leaving with her parents. She, too, had been caught. Upon entering the office Lisa noticed a sign that read, "Shoplifting is a crime punishable by Law."

The guard asked her name.

"Lisa Brown."

"Age?"

"Sixteen."

"Address?"

"12 Thomaston Lane."

"Phone number?"

"662-7134." Lisa watched the guard scribble down the numbers. She decided to take one last stab at her pretended innocence.

"I really think you've made a mistake Sir. If you want to you can search me." Really, I didn't do anything wrong."

"We're not playing games here. Lisa, do you realize that if you don't surrender the merchandise hidden in your shoe you face the possibility of up to one year or a large fine? Now would you please hand over the necklace."

Lisa was shocked. She couldn't figure out how they knew. She thought she had been so careful. Lisa faced up to her crime. Her whole body shook with sobs. She slowly reached down and tugged at her shoelace, slipped her foot out and cast her glance downward. The guard picked up the shoe and turned it upside down. All eyes in the room were on the scuffed up shoe. The $3.50 necklace slid out onto the table. Tears streamed down the accused face.

"I'm sorry, I never did this before. I'll pay for it O.K.?--really it's my--all my friends do it, they all said I couldn't. I just had to show them . . . Oh but I'm really sorry--I'll never come in this store again. I knew it's wrong."

"Now just calm down. It's too late to make your wrong right. You had the chance to pay for it but you stole it. You're sixteen and I'm sure you know by now what's right and wrong."

"P-p-please--" Lisa sobbed out.

"Are your parents at home now?"

"My parents--you don't have to call them--do you? They'll kill me, they'll be so mad . . ."

"You should have thought of that sooner. Can they be reached at this number?"

Lisa was crying hysterically by this time.

"Oh please, oh my God--can't I please pay for it?"

"I'm sorry but I must call your parents in."

What Lisa Brown and hundreds of other teenagers don't realize is that shoplifters are prosecuted. Shoplifting is a misdemeanor subject to a fine or up to one year in jail. A sixteen-year-old is considered an adult and it goes down on their permanent record. The shoplifter is required to go before a judge and face the consequences. That criminal record will follow them throughout their life. That means that any time a job of college application is filled out they may be asked about their criminal record. A juvenile is considered to be anyone under sixteen. They too may go to Family Court and the punishment is left to the discretion of the Judge.

Many teenagers are under the impression that if they are apprehended they will get off with just a lecture. They consider shoplifting "just a lark." This "lark" hurts the small retail owners hardest because they don't have the security measures that larger retail stores in the Syracuse area employ.

Syracuse Malls and Shopping Centers have had to resort to electronically sensitive tags, two-way mirrors, closed-circuit tv's, sophisticated alarm systems, and larger security forces to cut down on the millions of dollars being stolen. Many of the stores have hidden lookout stations above signs where security agents survey the shoppers. The electronically sensitive tags can only be removed from the merchandise by a special wand without setting off an alarm.

The saddest part is when the store security must call in the parents of the apprehended teenager. The utter disbelief and shock in the mother's voice when she hears that her son or daughter has been caught The disapointed parent sitting in the waiting room counting the minutes till the police arrive.

Teenage shoplifters, like Lisa, are caught everyday in area suburban malls. These are the teenagers that come from nice, middle class families. These are the teenagers who have been taught better than to take what is not theirs. They aren't underprivileged children who don't know and have never been taught not to steal. Yet, there is some strange quirk in human behavior that causes them to steal "just for fun." No matter how anyone looks at it, Shoplifting is "A CRIME PUNISHABLE BY LAW."

SHOPLIFTING IS A CRIME

by Patricia L. McCarthy

(The names in this article are ficticious)

Lisa eyed the sparkling necklace. The tag on it was $13.50. She shifted her glance around the jewelry department. The store was crowded and the salesgirl was busy with another customer. Lisa thought to herself, "No one will notice a little necklace--it's such a big store, they have lots of money. Anyway, I don't want to spend my paycheck."

Lisa knew her friends did it all the time, but still--she was worried, what if she got caught? She knew she had the crisp $20 dollar bill from her eighteenth birthday. Lisa figured she had spent so much money in the store before, she was justified in helping herself, just this once. "Besides," she thought to herself, "if all her other friends were able to get away with it, then why shouldn't she be able to, and she wanted to buy those $25 shoes."

What Lisa Brown and hundreds of other teenagers don't realize is that shoplifters are prosecuted. Over thirty percent of all shoplifters are teens between the ages of 12 and 18. Retail crime is at an all-time high, and security guards are prosecuting offenders for their employers.

In 1972, it is estimated that shoplifters helped themselves to 3.5 billion dollars worth of merchandise. This astounding figure jumped to 6.5 billion in 1975 and the figures are still climbing.

"They'll never notice," thought Lisa, and as she turned she knocked the necklace off the rack with her coat sleeve, then stooped to tie her shoe. She slipped the necklace into her shoe, stood up and walked away with a feeling of ecstatic accomplishment.

The feeling didn't last too long. Lisa was unaware of the plainclothed security guard watching Lisa help herself. The guard talked into the tiny microphone which was hidden in his collar. He alerted another guard stationed by the door. Just as Lisa stepped outside the store the security guard walked over to Lisa and tapped her on the shoulder.

Plainclothed security guards are found in stores across the nation. The increase in shoplifting has caused merchants to resort to electronically sensitive tags that set off alarms if taken outside ths store, two-way mirrors, closed-circuit tv's rotate on trolleys on the ceiling, sophisticated alarm systems and larger security forces cut down on the millions being stolen. Many stores have hidden lookout stations above signs where security guards survey the shoppers. Electronically sensitive tags can only be removed from the merchandise by a special wand without setting off an alarm. All of these devises aid in catching culprits.

"Excuse me miss, but would you please come with me. I'm the store security and I'd like to have a word with you."

Lisa was astonished and filled with a feeling of dread at the same time.

"What's wrong, I didn't do anything!" Lisa blurted out.

"If you'd please come with me, I'm sure we can straighten this out quickly" replied the guard.

Lisa looked around at the people staring at her, as if she was a common criminal.

"But I didn't do anything. I have to go meet my friends--"

"I don't want to cause trouble in front of the other customers, but I can place you under arrest if you refuse to some along peacefully. I have the right to place you under arrest according to the Business Law.

She decided to take one last stab at her pretended innocence.

"I really think you've made a mistake Sir, if you want to you can search me. Really, I didn't do anything wrong" she lied.

"Do you know your rights?"

"What--I . . ."

"You have the right to remain silent . . ."

Lisa couldn't believe this was happening. She was being arrested for shoplifting. "Oh my God, what are my parents going to say--I can't believe this is happening" she thought to herself.

The saddest part is when the store security must call in the parent of the apprehended teenage shoplifter. The utter disbelief and shock in the mother's voice when she hears that her son or daughter has been caught. The disappointed parent sitting in the waiting room counting the minutes till their child is relased into their custody.

Many teenagers are under the impression that if they are apprehended they will get off with a lecture. They consider shoplifting "just a lark". This "lark" is a misdeameanor subject to probating a fine of $500, or up to one year in jail. A sixteen year old is considered an adult and the crime is recorded on their permanent record. The criminal record will follow that person throughout their life. Anytime a job, college or credit application is filled out, the teen may be asked about their criminal record. A juvenile is considered to be anyone under sixteen. They too may go to Family Court and the punishment is left up to the discretion of the Judge.

"Miss, do you realize if you don't surrender the hidden merchandise, you face the possibility of up to one year or a large fine? Now would you please hand over the necklace."

Lisa was shocked. She couldn't figure out how they knew. She thought she had been so careful. Lisa faced up to her crime. Her whole body shook with sobs. She slowly reached down and tugged at her shoelace, slipped her foot out and cast her glance downward. The guard picked up the shoe and turned it upside down. The $13.50 necklace slid out onto the table. Tears streamed down the accused face.

Teenage shoplifters, like Lisa, are caught everyday. These teenagers come from all kinds of families. Yet a great many of them come from middle to upper class families. They aren't underprivileged children who don't know any better and have never been taught not to steal. Lisa made the decision to steal knowing she could pay. Unfortunately, there is some strange quirk in human behavior that causes teens to steal "just for fun." If the temptation to steal is too great, just remember this--Lisa Brown was fined $50 on disorderly conduct charges for a $13.50 necklace. Next time it could be you because--SHOPLIFTING IS A CRIME PUNSIHABLE BY LAW and someone will be watching.

SHOPLIFTING IS A CRIME

by Patricia L. McCarthy

Lisa eyed the sparkling necklace. The tag on it was $13.50. She glanced around the jewelry department. The store was crowded and the salesgirl was busy with another customer. Lisa thought to herself, "No one will miss a little necklace--it's such a big store, they have lots of money. Anyway, I need my paycheck for that $30 dollar Senior Prom dress."

Lisa knew her friends did it all the time. If all the other girls were able to get away with it, then why shouldn't she be able to. Lisa figured she had spent so much money in the store before, she was justified in helping herself--just this once. But still--she was worried. What if she got caught?

What Lisa Brown* and hundreds of other teenagers don't know is that shoplifters are prosecuted. Over 30 percent of all shoplifters are between the ages of 12 and 18. Retail crime is at an all-time high, and security guards are apprehending offenders for their employers.

In 1972, it is estimated that shoplifters helped themselves to 3.5 billion dollars worth of merchandise. This astounding figure jumped to 6.5 billion dollars in 1975 and the figures are still climbing.

"They'll never notice," thought Lisa, and as she turned she knocked the necklace off the rack with her coat sleeve, then stopped, as if to tie her shoe. She slipped the necklace into her shoe, stood up and walked away with a feeling of ecstatic accomplishment.

The feeling didn't last too long. Lisa was unaware of the observant plainclothes security guard nearby.

Plainclothes security guards are found in stores across the nation. Merchants have had to employ larger security forces to cut down on the millions being stolen. Many stores have two-way mirrors, hidden lookout stations, and closed circuit tv's to aid security guards.

Another type of security aid is an electronically sensitive merchandise tag. This tag sets off an alarm if the merchandise is taken outside the store. The tag can only be removed by a special "wand" or key. Some stores have had to resort to chaining expensive items to a bar, or threading a special thin wire through the item which sets off an alarm if the wire circuit is broken. One other type is a weight-sensitive alarm that goes off if the employee walks away from an unlocked display case.

All of the above mentioned devices aid in catching culprits but security guards apprehend the majority of them.

Lisa was walking towards the mall entrance door. The security guard talked into a tiny microphone hidden under his collar. He alerted another guard stationed by the door. Just as Lisa stepped outside, the guard walked over to her and tapped her shoulder.

---

*ficticious name

"Excuse me Miss, but would you please come with me. I'm the store security and I'd like to have a word with you."

Astonished, Lisa was filled with a feeling of dread.

"What's wrong, I didn't do anything!" Lisa blurted out.

"If you'd please come with me, I'm sure we can straighten this out quickly," replied the guard.

Lisa looked around at the people staring at her, as if she was a common criminal.

"But I didn't do anything--I have to meet my friends--"

"I don't want to cause trouble in front of the other customers, but I can have you placed under arrest if you refuse to come along peacefully. I have the right to according to the Business Law."

Lisa decided to take one last stab at pretending innocence.

"I really think you've made a mistake Sir. If you want to you can search me."

"Do you know your rights?"

"What--I . . ."

"You have the right to remain silent . . ."

Lisa couldn't believe she was being arrested for shoplifting! "Oh my God, what are my parents going to say--" she thought.

The saddest part occurs when the store security must call in the parents of the apprehended teenage shoplifter. The utter disbelief and shock in the mother's voice when she hears her son or daughter has been caught. The look on the disappointed parent's face sitting in the waiting room counting the minutes till their child is released into their custody.

Many teenagers are under the impression that if they are apprehended they will get off with a lecture. They consider shoplifting "just a lark." This "lark" is a misdemeanor subject to a maximum three years probation, a fine of 500 dollars or up to one year in jail. Occasionally, the charge can be reduced to disorderly conduct charges for a first time offender. The fine for disorderly conduct charges is up to 100 dollars. A sixteen year old is considered an adult and the crime is recorded on his permanent record. A juvenile is considered to be anyone under sixteen. They, too, may go to Family Court, and the punishment is left up to the discretion of the Judge.

"Miss, do you realize if you don't surrender the concealed merchandise, you face the possibility of up to one year in jail or a large fine? Now would you please hand over the necklace."

Lisa was shocked. She couldn't figure out how they knew. She thought she had been so careful. As Lisa faced up to her crime, her body shook with sobs. She slowly reached down and tugged at her shoelace, slipped her foot out and cast her glance downward. The guard picked up the shoe and turned it upside down. The $13.50 necklace slid out onto the table. Tears streamed down the accused face.

Teenage shoplifters are caught everyday. These teenagers come from all kinds of family backgrounds. A great many of them come from middle to upper class families. Like Lisa, they are not underprivileged. Lisa made the decision to steal, knowing she could pay for the necklace.

But is it really worth it to steal? If the thief doesn't get away with it, he has charges brought against him. The apprehended culprit has a permanent blot on his record. This criminal record will follow him throughout his life. Anytime a job, college or credit application is filled out, the teen may be asked about his criminal record. Charges held against him are considered a mar on his character standing. If the temptation to steal is too great just remember this--Lisa Brown was fined 75 dollars for a $13.50 necklace. She was lucky. Lisa was able to get her charge reduced to disorderly conduct charges. Next time the sentence could be imprisonment because--SHOPLIFTING IS A CRIME PUNISHABLE BY LAW.

Critique of Patricia McCarthy's Article

The article by Patricia McCarthy was accepted for publication immediately after it was sent out on speculation as part of the course requirement. It appeared in the October 29, 1978 issue of Glad!, a magazine for Christian teenagers published quarterly in weekly parts by Standard Publishing Company, a division of Standex International Corporation, Cincinnati, Ohio. Writing for the specific audience helped Patricia focus her material, she noted, but the immediate feedback of her peer audience, all of whom had been previously acquainted with her target audience and had been instructed to assume their demographics, were her most useful sounding board.

Readers were impressed by Patricia's creativity and control of basics. They liked the opening anecdote, but they felt it was much too long. They also observed that the article seemed to "split" into two halves, one pure anecdote, the other straight exposition. They suggested two things. First, they said Patty ought to weave the expository message through the narrative portion of the story. Second, they felt she should develop the expository material much more fully in order to provide needed statistics on the incidence of theft and hard facts regarding detection, liability, and punishment. They also questioned limiting the situation to the Syracuse area. They pointed out that since the problem was of national scope, both anecdote and crime facts should be universalized. They criticized the ending as weak.

Audience response to the second draft was more positive. Readers felt anecdotal and expository material were more successfully integrated. They said the facts regarding detection were more fully presented, but they asked for further details on liability and punishment. They questioned the organization of some sections, particularly paragraphs two and seven. They cited several instances of awkward passages which could be made clearer through the simple addition of a word or phrase, or by the substitution of one word for another. In paragraph four, they replaced "prosecuting" with "arresting" or "apprehending." In paragraph five, they suggested adding "as if" or "pretending" after the word "stooped" in the phrase "stooped to tie her shoe." In the sixth paragraph, they corrected "plainclothed" to "plainclothes", suggested qualifying the word with the adjective "observant," and exchanged the wordy phrase "watching Lisa help herself" to the single word "nearby." They made similar corrections for diction, syntax, and wordiness elsewhere, observing that seemingly minor points truly affected meaning and coherence--an attitude quite opposite to their initial "what's the difference, you know what I mean" stand. They continued to object to the ending, questioning the logic of the concluding statement. They felt Patty should sound some specific warning note in order to give the reader a more forceful conclusion. They suggested citing the permanency of the blot on one's record and the liability for a fine larger than the initial theft as examples of stronger deterrents to the crime of shoplifting. They also criticized several instances of grammatical and mechanical weaknesses. They pointed to misplaced parts and comma splices in two or three spots, sentence fragments in the paragraph beginning with the words "The saddest part," and pronoun agreement problems in the paragraph opening with "Many teenagers are under the impression."

Readers were quite satisfied with Patty's third and final draft. They felt she successfully incorporated ideas obtained through audience feedback, and also added useful details in the body and conclusion. Their assessment was apparently accurate, judging from the ready acceptance she received from the editor of the publication whose readership Patty had chosen to address. Aside from the addition of "It is also a sin according to God's law" which this religiously oriented publication incorporated into Patricia's conclusion, the published version was virtually the same as the third and final draft.

Notes

[1] Stuart Chase's popular essay "Gobbledygook," which satirizes the circuitous and overblown prose often pumped out by scholars, lawyers, government officials, and businessmen, has been reprinted frequently. My source is Chase's book, The Power of Words (Harcourt, Brace and World, 1954). Donna Woolfolk Cross, Word Abuse: How the Words We Use, Use Us (New York: Coward, McCann and Georgegan, 1979) is a more recent work on inflated language. Martin Gardner, The Arrow Book of Brain Teasers (New York: Scholastic Book Services, 1964) includes an amusing section which translates well-known proverbs into polysyllabic gibberish.

[2] My audience-centered approach is not new, since it derives from my journalistic training and career experience as a practicing writer. Increasing sensitivity to reader-oriented attitudes toward teaching writing seems to be gaining ground, however. I refer in particular to the recent work by Ruth Mitchell and Mary Taylor, "The Integrating Perspective: An Audience-Response Model for Writing." College English, 41 (1979), pp. 247-271. Mitchell and Taylor describe their audience-response model and contrast it with "two prevalent (frequently unconscious) rival frameworks," the writer-centered and product-centered. I do not argue the relative merits of reader-directed, writer-directed, and product-directed writing, since I fully accept the professional communicator's audience-oriented stance. Rather, my concern during my ten years as professor of college composition has been to refine what I feel is a workable method of teaching students that the audience-oriented approach will help them write more effectively. Using pedagogical techniques which emphasize intended audience and desired response, I expose students to the total communication cycle which includes the allegedly "rival frameworks" of writer and product, as I shall later show.

Donald McQuade and Robert Atwan, Popular Writing in America: The Interaction of Style and Audience (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977) emphasizes how a particular medium and a presumed readership affect a writer's style.

[3] A short but very useful volume focusing on the writer's responsibility toward the audience is Madelon E. Heatherington, Outside-In (Glenview, Ill.: Scott, Foresman, 1971). Other audience-centered textbooks include: Sylvan Barnet, A Short Guide to Writing about Literature (Boston: Little Brown, 1979); Andre Fontaine, The Art of Writing Non-fiction (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1974); William L. Rivers, Finding Facts: Interviewing, Observing, Using Reference Sources (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1975) Roy Paul Nelson, Articles and Features (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1978).

[4] The definition is from Warren K. Agee, Phillip H. Ault and Edwin Emery, Introduction to Mass Communications (New York: Harper and Row, 1979), p. 4; but is so basic it could have been stated by other authors.

[5] Many disciplines refer to inter- and intra-personal communication and feedback loops. The Mitchell and Taylor article cited above contains a useful audience-response diagram. My own drawing (see page 137) is the result of many years of observing the communication process in my own workshops. Communication texts which include useful sections on the writer-channel-reader relationship, and feedback loops are: Agee, Ault, and Emery; S. Watson Dunn and Arnold M. Barban, Advertising: Its Role in Modern Marketing (Hinsdale, Ill.: Dryden, 1974); Carroll A. Nolan and Rowan F. Warmke, Marketing, Sales Promotion, and Advertising (Cincinnati: South-Western, 1965); Peter M. Sandman, David M. Rubin, and David B. Sachsman, Media: An Introductory Analysis of American Mass Communications (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1972).

[6] For further explanations of the phenomena, consult Agee, Ault, and Emery, pp. 1-9; Sandman, Rubin, and Sachsman, pp. 2-3; Raymond S. Ross, Speech Communication: Fundamentals and Practice (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1974), pp. 21-39; Nolan, p. 9.

[7] For a fuller explanation of these psychological strategies, consult Sandman, Rubin, and Sachsman, pp. 2-4.

[8] The following contain useful discussions of word values and propaganda techniques: Daniel Dieterich, ed., Teaching about Doublespeak (Urbana, Ill.: NCTE, 1976); William Albig, Public Opinion (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1939); Stuart Chase, The Tyranny of Words (1938; rpt. New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1966); C. K. Ogden and I. A. Richards, The Meaning of Meaning (1936; rpt. New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1956); S. I. Hayakawa, Language in Thought and Action (1939; rpt. New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1978); Hayakawa, ed., Language, Meaning and Maturity: Selections from ETC., 1943-1953 (New York: Harper and Row, 1954); and the aforementioned Smith, Lasswell and Casey text.

[9] I can offer no scientific evidence, but if student publishing and unsolicited testimonials from former students are valid criteria--and I think they are--then the working laboratory which exposes students to the complete communication cycle can be termed effective. Almost every semester, two or three students out of a class of about twenty sell manuscripts prepared in partial fulfillment of course requirements. From the Spring 1979 class, five students received acceptances. With astonishing (and gratifying!) regularity, former students write me from graduate schools or from their places of employment to say that the communi-

cation skills learned in my courses are enormously useful in graduate school or on the job.

I describe my methodology in detail in "A Laboratory Approach to Teaching 'The Basics' in College Composition Courses," Arizona English Bulletin, 8 (February 1976), pp. 78-81. The article discusses the logistics of the laboratory plan and shows how peer criticism benefits both gifted and slower students.

[a] In "'I Like It' Doesn't Make it Good: Writing Is Discipline," Arizona English Bulletin, 22 (February 1980), pp. 89-94, I attempt to show how the working laboratory can help replace the purely subjective approach to writing with objective norms and forms that permit useful feedback. As usual, my emphasis is on the communication cycle and the public nature of writing.

[10] Sources I have found useful in generating article ideas and providing market information are: Ruth W. Gregory, Anniversaries and Holidays: A Calendar of Days and How to Observe Them (Chicago: American Library Association, 1975); Bruce Joel Hillman and Judith Ann Beraha, eds., Writer's Market '79 (Cincinnati: Writer's Digest, 1978); A. S. Burack, ed., The Writer's Handbook (Boston: The Writer, 1973).

NEW BOOK HIGHLIGHTS DEVELOPMENTS IN RESEARCH AND PRACTICE OF TEACHING WRITING

Keeping up to date on the teaching of writing takes constant effort. A new book from NCTE, THEORY AND PRACTICE IN THE TEACHING OF COMPOSITION: PROCESSING, DISTANCING, AND MODELING, combines highlights from the writings of influential composition theorists and researchers of the past 20 years.

Editors Miles Myers and James Gray of the Bay Area Writing Project introduce the concepts involved in three major approaches to writing research: processing, distancing, and modeling, and outline the sorts of questions researchers ask, concentrating on "the speed, storage limits, and organizing principles of the mind" (processing); "the relationship between the speaker and the subject and between the speaker and the audience" (distancing); and "the imitation of written texts" (modeling).

In his concluding essay on the relationship between teachers and researchers, Myers notes signs that the two communities may be drawing closer together because of researchers' new interest in studying writing in true-to-life settings, not stripped of context. The book also includes an extensive bibliography on writing research and classroom applications.

THEORY AND PRACTICE IN THE TEACHING OF COMPOSITION: PROCESSING, DISTANCING, AND MODELING, edited by Miles Myers and James Gray. 256 pages, paperbound. Price: $11.50; NCTE members, $10. ISBN: 0-8141-5399-2. LC: 83-2288. Available from NCTE, 1111 Kenyon Rd., Urbana, IL 61801. Stock # 53992.

STUDENT SENSITIVITY TO TEACHERS' CRITERIA: A STUDY OF BASIC WRITERS

Deborah H. Holdstein, Linda DeCelles, and Tim Redman

Background and Genesis

This study originated at the start of a summer Institute funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities at the University of Chicago in 1981. Professor Joseph Williams' "Style and Discourse" seminar provided a thorough context of research in writing theory out of which the first, conceptual and design portions of this experiment grew: our discussions championed the "top-down" approach to writing while airing viewpoints of psycholinguists, writing teachers, reading psychologists, and developmental writing researchers, among others (see Bibliography). Through our own readings as well as from those in the seminar, several research categories surfaced which warranted exploration in terms of their practical, classroom consequences: a developmental theory, particularly in the work of Bereiter, Scardamalia, and Bracewell (1979); Graves (1975); and Bruce, Collins, Rubin, and Genter (1977); a cognitive processing view, as in the work of Bruce, et al., (1977); Hayes and Flower (1980a, 1980b); and Collins and Genter (1979); and linguistic and psycholinguistic theories, as in the research presented by Rumelhart (1975), Young (1970), and de Beaugrande (1979).

As Hayes and Flower point out (1980a) a "top-down" approach can yield important data about writing processes: Bruce, et al. (1977) note, however, that "a person's ability . . . to identify problems explicitly may lag behind implicit knowledge of the area" (p. 40). Many examples of this are underscored in the literature of developmentally-oriented researchers in both writing and reading: Gleitman, Gleitman, and Shipley (1972) and deVilliers and deVilliers (1974) find that young children can identify that sentences need semantic and syntactic corrections before they as writers are able to correct them on their own. And as these researchers point out, people can often differentiate between good and bad writing even when they are not good writers themselves. However, the same re-

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search suggests that poorer writers, when given a text to edit, will note micro- rather than macrostructural errors, while the better writers will first point out "top-down" or macrostructural considerations. In fact, teachers asked to grade the same sample papers met this expectation.

This vast research context pointed to questions which, it was hoped, would have significant and practical implications for classroom teaching. As Segal's work reveals (in a recent edition of College Composition and Communication, 1982), "It seems that a novice writer is not likely to improve quickly if his or her teacher also behaves as if writing were essentially an exercise in form." She found that experienced teachers, when correcting essays, emphasized the importance of content and responded to it in a personal way; her conclusion was that these acts of communication were "good practice supported by theory" (p. 306), in that students found these types of comments most helpful. Our study, then, was designed with the following research questions in mind:

> -Since it is established that the teacher's behavior is important, how do the things a teacher feels are important in writing influence what students think are important?
>
> -If these evaluative goals are communicated in the classroom, do basic writing students improve--that is, become more "sensitive to" the things their teachers consider important in good writing? Does this sensitivity indicate improvement in their own writing?

The implications of these questions seemed to us rather far-reaching. Writers have all experienced a variety of feedback over the years relating to school writing. From this feedback, many of them abstract a general "sense" of what constitutes good, correct, or "acceptable" prose (Shaughnessy, 1978). Since poor writers are often deficient in both mechanical and organizational components of writing (although many basic writing students have a strong sense of organization and little sense of mechanical correctness), they may tend to focus on one level or the other; and whatever revision or editing they have performed on their own writing will, in part, be directed by their own hypotheses about the desired "product" coupled with "what the teacher wants." Can "what the teacher wants" be communicated in specific enough ways to create a productive rather than a stifling atmosphere and be adapted and used by the student, especially the remedial student, for improvement?

The NEH "Early ID" Program and College-level Basic Writers

The initial pilot study was run during the same period of time as the University of Chicago Seminar, and used students from another NEH-funded project called "The Early ID Program" at the Illinois Institute of Technology. In this six-to-eight week session, students from Chicago-area high schools come to IIT for intensive study in one of two pre-professionally-oriented programs--Engineering and Medicine. The program is among the first of its kind in the United States and attracts bright, career-oriented students. In 1981, the students involved in the study also attended an important "Communications" component of the program, and it was with the cooperation of the five communications/ humanities instructors involved that this study was run in its early stages.

In the NEH project, the following design was followed: With ten separate classes, about twenty students each, the test design involved reciprocity of pre- and post-test questions for greater statistical reliability. Preliminary results showed the following (see Design section):

Pre: the pre-test essay and student evaluations of remedial essay showed, for poorer writers, an overt concern with micro- rather than macro-structural errors. Teachers, all given the same pre-test essay to correct, tended to comment first on macro-structural errors or needs. Teachers were asked to reinforce during teaching time such factors as organization, thesis, paragraphing, etc., (those things which they themselves had listed in order as "most important" on the pre-test essay) while of course working on "correctness" and microstructural considerations.

Post: the post-test essay and student evaluation of remedial essay (different topics and sample essays "reciprocated" with the other groups) showed, for poorer writers who had improved, a correlation between the teacher's sense of what was important and what became the student's sense of what was important in good writing. A greater number of students in the post-tests had a stronger sense of macro-structural considerations while showing improvement in punctuation and mechanics.

The pre- and post-test essays were scored holistically; the students' evaluations of the remedial essay were hand-scored and charted using Diderich's (1974) criteria for distinguishing judgments about an essay's quality. In his view, the five most influential factors usually considered in evaluation: ideas, mechanics, organization, wording, and "flavor" (a quality which reveals a certain "unique personality").

While the results of the conceptual study with IIT's Early ID students were significant and provided useful information for improving the conditions of testing, the test design, and the theoretical backgrounds of the experiment, its favorable outcome was more difficult to substantiate statistically than was its fall replication. In the summer program, too many conditions varied to make the statistical outcome completely reliable: teaching styles, a certain "fluidity" within the program which caused some classes to miss the communications component for day-long field trips, and the impossibility of our imposing certain "controls" on the teachers, and hence on the experiment, at that time.

With certain aspects of the experiment modified (see Design section and the Appendix, which contains sample essay questions and essay for revision), we ran the study once again in the fall of 1981 using the three basic writing classes conducted that semester at IIT. The two instructors met beforehand to discuss standards and criteria for teaching; it was decided that one or two specific instructional components would be far too "loaded" towards obtaining the results we were looking for. The population of students was large enough for significant statistical assessment, and yet the number of teachers involved was few enough to ensure that similar teaching standards and criteria were being followed. The research and pedagogical implications of the fall sample will comprise this full report.

Design

Each student was given a "pre-test" and a "post-test" consisting of sample compositions to evaluate. The sample compositions contained an equal number of grammatical and organizational errors and weaknesses (see Appendix). The students were asked to identify and make lists of the faults in the composition; they were given free rein to identify the faults. However, they were directed to list each type of error in order of its importance to them. The instructors did not tell them to look for specific types of errors, such as incorrect grammar or lack of a thesis.

The sample composition was used in both the pre-test and the post-test to determine if after fifteen weeks of intensive instruction in composition the students would identify problems they had not recognized previously and if they would change the order of emphasis of problems cited.

At the time of the pre-test the students had had no formal instruction in composition in the program. By the time of the post-test they had had fifteen weeks of instruction and had been introduced to concepts and terms like thesis, organization, paragraphing, etc. Each of the teachers had agreed to instill similar values in teaching the writing process. They were looking for the relative emphasis the students placed on microstructural and macrostructural errors: microstructural errors include mistakes in grammar, spelling, and punctuation; macrostructural errors involve lack of a coherent thesis and poor organization of ideas. It was assumed at the time of the pre-test that the students in a remedial class would be likely to spot grosser, more obvious "technical" errors in grammar while they would be less able to focus on organizational elements.

Each student was told to make a list of the errors and weaknesses s/he found in the sample composition. Later, the pre-test and post-test of each student was read and a list of the errors and weaknesses the student cited was made. The problems cited in pre-test and post-test were set side-by-side and examined for repetition, addition, and omission of terms between pre-test and post-test. (See Chart I). We weighed the preponderance of macrostructural and microstructural errors between tests, and constructed a chart and listed side-by-side the errors each of us had gathered from the students' lists. After listing the exact terms the students were identifying as problems (e.g., "sentence structure" for "bad sentences"). A tally of micro- and macrostructural errors was made for the pre-test and the post-test. If the number of macrostructural errors exceeded the number of microstructural errors cited in the post-test, we marked the student with a plus (+) and concluded that s/he had improved his/her conception of good writing. If the number of macro- and microstructural errors remained the same, the student received an equal sign (=) and we assumed no real improvement. Finally, if the number of microstructural errors exceeded the number of macrostructural errors in the post-test, we concluded that the student had weakened in his/her grasp of good writing skills and was given a minus sign (-).

PRE			Pre To Post Result	POST		
I (Researcher)	II	III		I	II	III
Gonzalez						
topic tense spelling	one idea "flow together" spelling	transition tense spelling	+	thesis organization	word choice summary thesis	organization development word choice evidence
Ambul						
tenses	sentence org.	comma	=	fragment	fragment run-on	-------
Rogowski						
thesis organization grammar	comma subject	idea/sentence conclusion	+	punctuation coherence conclusion topic sentence	thesis organization ideas fragment	organization paragraph unity apostrophes spelling
Mayden						
———	punctuation	------	=	spelling	thesis contractions	------
Poczateck						
thesis grammar tense	sentences spelling punctuation	thesis	-	punctuation	logic organization thesis support grammar	punctuation
Collins						
———	capitals	logic capitals	+	paragraph	sentence structure paragraph examples wordiness	wordy thesis development tense topic sentence

CHART I

Results and Evaluation

To begin, the initial hypothesis of the experiment was adequately confirmed. Three remedial classes containing 23 students were tested. Of the 20 students for whom we have both pre- and post-test results, most of the students (12) absorbed their teachers' hierarchy of values, showing a definite shift in their awareness from microstructural to macrostructural errors. Four students remained at the same level, and four shifted in the other direction. Since there seems to be general agreement that grammatical errors have been overly stressed, and errors in organization not stressed enough (Brown, 1980a), this can be taken as an encouraging sign. However, some complications arose during the course of evaluating the results which are worth mentioning here.

The first hurdle was the students' lack of mastery of the terminology used in discussing writing. Although in a few cases it was clear that the student had mastered a tone used by past teachers in comments on papers (caricatured, we are sure), there was no firm handle on the terms generally used to describe error (comma splice, agreement). While it was clear that terms such as "build ideas" and "development" were equivalent, as were "main ideas" and "thesis," what about "details" and "thoughts?" And what kind of error is "words?" Does that mean diction or spelling? In all, students marked errors in more than thirty categories.

The next hurdle concerned the evaluators' own occasional uncertainty about student categories. What constituted macro- or microstructural errors? Although for purposes of this experiment this hurdle was cleared when we agreed to record a result when two out of the three of us agreed,it did raise interesting questions. What about the grey area between macrostructural and microstructural errors? While there may be thirty major competencies associated with composition (Mellon, 1978), it also seems to be true that reliability in evaluation decreases when ten or more categories are considered (Mullis, 1980). No wonder that we are all so confortable with grading errors in mechanics, but less so when other factors must be explained.

We also found that increased macrostructural perception was related to success in the course. For the students in English 100, a grade of "C" or better is required to pass; otherwise the student is required to repeat the course. The finals, which determine the grades, are evaluated by instructors who do not know the students. Of the 23 students in the three sections, 16 (roughly 70%) passed, while 7 (roughly 30%) did not. Of the students in our study who improved their macrostructural perception, 11 out of 12 passed the English 100 course. Of those who remained the same or decreased, 2 out of 4 passed. Although the number of students involved is too small to reach a definite conclusion, it seems clear that an increase in awareness of the higher levels of organization led to increased success in the course.

Finally, it should be stated that we think that there is positive value in having students evaluate the themes of their peers. As teachers, when we evaluate according to criteria and debate about which criteria to use, we discover that we do indeed _have_ criteria, often unstated. Having our students temporarily assume the role of English teacher will help them understand that there are criteria, and more importantly that there are reasons for them.

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APPENDIX - MATERIALS GIVEN TO STUDENTS

(RECIPROCATED PRE TO POST)

Page I

Form B

Name____________________________

Group___________________________

PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY BEFORE YOU BEGIN

On the next page is an essay with a wide range of "problems." In this exercise, you are the teacher; please correct the essay. Feel free to circle errors, write comments in the margins, between the lines--wherever you see fit. When you have carefully gone through the essay, review what you've done. Since it would be difficult for the author to immediately seize and understand all of the different things you've marked, CLEARLY state on the third page your final comments to the writer: summarize the mistakes or problems you've found, and in order of importance to you, state in your comments the areas that you feel the author should work hardest on to improve. Try to make your comments encouraging, yet specific. But remember: At the end of your final comments (to be written on page 3), LIST in order of importance the TYPES of things you feel the writer should work on to improve his essay and writing in general.

(Instructions are the same for Forms A and B)

FORM A

In the essay Fast Food the menu in the fast food restaurants includs the following things, hamburger, hot dog, pizza, and chicken, the author didn't include tacos, seefood, and steak in their menus. The ingredients in the food are raised and processed in-to edibls that would end up. In your meal the people who usaly go to a fast food place isn't satisfied tody because the menu suits their atmosphere. We have got use to the the fast food restaurants, becase the restaurants are a Part of our Life-style, personaly and socially. But this is never thought over most people would think that getting food from the fast food restaurant is quicker and economical, for people in a hurey the fast food places saves time. most people get food at a fast food restaurant because they can make its own lunch. When you add up all of this, fast food restaurants saving time, efforts, even money.

Although, some prefer to carry thier lunch around. And they find out that thier lunch is cold and soggy. Fast food comes on hot and in most cases, juicy, people prefer hot and juicy lunches rather than soggy and colder.

When you make your meal the price of your meal, depends, on the amount of ingredients and amount of gas burn in your stove, however. There is a possibility of your meal going down the trash disposal. Can waste your food budget, there are coupons advertising lower food prices. People can taken in advantage of the sale, they can use the coupons; on the advertisement, if any. There are advantages to fast food restaurants.

FORM B

In every know society some people take substances that cause aleration of the mind. The two main groups, includes drugs such as, cocaine, herion, and LSD, alcoholic drunks such as beers, wines, and spirits are reltivly mild and harmless, excepted when took in always large dozes. Even in small dozes, some People Set up a dependance that can totaly dominate a persons, change behavyor, and effect the minds.

Alciholics is drunkards who depend on alcohol to such an extent; that eventually they showing noticeable mental and fhysical changing. Most alkiholics are persistant heavy drunkers, but, various, patterns of alcohol abuse has been aidentified. Drinking catagoreis had been broken in-to those that drunk less than once a year, infrequent drinking, at least monthly three to four drinks per session and, heavy drinkers, almost daily, with up to five drinks.

Some people, drink steadily over many years and sufer physical damage in late middle age as consequences. Brain damage with sever memory loss is not uncommon.

Tolerance for alcohol develop rapidly however and: increasing amounts are drank to obtain relief. Researching and the public shows this is bad. Heavy drinking runs into problems such as severe depression with guilt feelings which may become so severe they could end in suicide treatment of alkoholism is developed an awareness on the parts of the alcoholic that he has a problem with drinking, some believe it is metabolic.

Page III

Form B

Name__________________________

Group__________________________

Refer to Page I for complete instructions, if you wish. On this page, write your final comments to the writer of the essay you have just read and corrected. Remember: be specific in indicating the kinds of errors you've found, and before you're finished, list, in order of importance to you, the kinds or categories of errors/writing proglems you feel this writer needs to consider.

Your final comments:

EVALUATION OF COMPOSITION IN SHOREHAM-WADING RIVER

Mark F. Goldberg

For the past four years, writing has been a very high priority in the Shoreham-Wading River School District. The desire to train teachers in composition and to improve student writing was felt by Board of Education members, community residents, teachers, administrators, and many students, including college students who visited their former teachers and told them what they wished they had learned to do better. In 1978, I was asked by the superintendent to play the central role in establishing an active and effective composition training program.

Each summer, starting in 1979, a National Writing Project Center has operated in the district. Professors Sondra Perl and Richard Sterling of Lehman College, CUNY, teach a ninety-hour workshop to twenty-five teachers. In addition, Perl and Sterling consult in the district six times each year; a district-wide composition committee exists and meets at least three times each year to discuss writing, share ideas, or consider major composition issues. Two ad hoc committees have worked on composition curriculum and the place of mechanics in composition; several teacher writing groups have been established; special interest writing committees meet in individual schools; six parent training sessions have been conducted; reports by students, teachers and me have been made to the Board of Education; teachers and I have attended workshops and made presentations at local, state and national conferences; Professor Perl received an NIE grant to do an ethnographic study of what is happening in a district where half of the teachers, K-12, are well trained in writing and teaching writing; ten teachers, representing most of the elementary and secondary grades, meet each Tuesday afternoon with Professor Perl to discuss "case-study" students and to assess the writing program.

This year the superintendent asked that a five-year study be done of the quality of student writing. To get advice on how to proceed, I met with ten of our most thoroughly trained teachers (Tuesday study group), spoke to Professors Perl and Sterling, phoned the Bay Area Writing Project

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in Berkeley, California, and sought out experts at the 1981 composition conference in San Francisco. I learned that the conditions, assignment, and evaluation must be consistent over the five years, that evaluating fifty percent or more of the papers in the grades studied would guarantee validity, and that the assignment would be critical because it must permit a serious response from each student and it must be repeated each year. Three raters scoring holistically would guarantee reliability if they were trained and "calibrated" (reached agreement on similar criteria and grades), and nothing would be learned until year three or four when an outside rater could see the effect (or lack of it) of intensive instruction over a period of time. My hypothesis is that as a result of the time, energy and expertise directed to student writing, the quality of the writing will improve over a period of years.

I met with three highly trained writing teachers for a full day, reported my findings to them and worked out the following decisions and guidelines.

Decision 1. Only eighth and eleventh graders would be tested. We wanted to see the effect of informed and intensive writing instruction after a period of several years. Besides we had more confidence in our ability to grade secondary papers than elementary papers. We were also anxious to evaluate students after three years in our middle school and three years in our high school.

Decision 2. We wanted to read the "best" paper a student could do. For over three years, we have trained students to think about their writing before they write, to write on subjects they care about, to write successive drafts until they felt this was the best paper they could produce at this time, and to seek help from peers, teachers, dictionaries, thesauruses, etc. We could not fully recreate the technique each teacher might use for allowing students to do their best work, but within reason ("testing conditions"), we wanted to be true to our own philosophy of composition. Therefore we gave teachers the following guidelines.

Guidelines:

Teachers may use whatever techniques they normally use for writing assignments within the following constraints:

a) Expository prose is required but should not restrict point of view.

b) This paper should be relatively short (one to three pages).

c) All work should be done in no more than five class periods.

d) All work should be done in school. Papers may not be worked on at home.

I met with the eighth and eleventh grade teachers and assured them that writing groups or usual teacher help in class was acceptable. I further told them that we wanted all students to write, so we would have the full range of ability represented. We asked for and received papers from our resource room students and our students who receive special help to prepare for the Regents' Certificate Test in writing. The assignment, of course, was central. We could not ask students to write about cars or rock music or computers because some students would be at a loss to respond. The assignment had to be general enough to include all, directed enough to supply focus, and interesting enough to engage students. The mode of discourse, audience and purpose had to be implicit in the assignment. After several false starts, we fixed on an assignment very close to one that has been used in several primary trait workshops at national conferences.

Assignment:

> Think of a place that you know or have known well. It might be a place where you have spent a great deal of time or have only been once. Write a description of this place. Assume that you are writing this description for someone who has never been to this place. Try to make your description so clear that your reader can imagine this place or can understand why you have chosen to write about it.

Preparation for evaluation was the next step in the process. We have approximately one-hundred and eighty students in each grade. I selected one-hundred papers randomly from grade eight and another hundred from grade eleven. That reduced the quantity of papers to be graded while maintaining a sufficiently large sample. Also, one-hundred is an excellent number to use when sorting papers or doing statistical analysis. The papers were coded 001 to 100 for each grade, the student's name was obliterated by a label and a master list was prepared so we could later determine who had written each paper. The papers were reproduced, the originals were returned to the classroom teachers, and evaluation began. I conducted a workshop for three teachers skilled in teaching and evaluating student writing. We discussed the assignment, listed our expectations, read twenty-five randomly selected essays and revised, as necessary, our expectations. Following is the final list of expectations;

1. There must be descriptive details: concrete or sensory. The details should relate to the theme and should be selected with the overall purpose in mind.

2. The description should be dominant -- or -- the attachment of significance should relate clearly and consistently to the place.

3. Some principle of organization must be apparent. The best organization is well integrated into the paper.

4. A successful paper will be relatively free of mechanical errors.

5. There should be some evidence of voice, that is, the personality of the writer should be in the paper.

The papers would be graded holistically, but this modified primary trait exercise helped all of us to focus much more sharply on the assignment and to get calibrated more quickly and surely.

Our immediate goal was to separate the papers into seven groups:

Evaluation Mark	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Descriptor	Best	Very Good	Good	Average	Fair	Poor	Worst
Number of Papers	5	10	20	30	20	10	5

We considered sorting the papers into three groups and then doing a further sort, but decided to label the papers 1 through 7 on round one. We agreed to grade ten papers to get final calibration or agreement and then to stop each twenty-five papers to be certain the group was never more than one category apart on a paper. A short discussion resolved all differences. We agreed that majority rule would prevail if an irreconcilable difference should develop. The three teachers were in substantial agreement all the way through, although there were many brief and excellent discussions of why a particular paper was rated one way or another. Of course, the final sort took some time because the distribution of papers on round one, and even round two, was less-than-perfect.

The final goal was to select benchmark papers from each category. Ostensibly, this was an easy task. Just select the two middle papers in each group. Thus, we would know what a "typically" good or poor paper in the eighth grade looked like. However, I asked the teachers to do one more task. Look at the fourteen "markers" (as we called them) for grade eight, and be certain that they represented a continuum. I asked them to do the same thing for grade eleven. What followed was a careful re-examination of the markers, as well as an examination of papers close in quality, some very lively and informed discussion of student writing, a bit of substitution, and finally, resolution.

Year one is now complete. Subsequent years will be easier because we know how to do the job.

WRITING ASSESSMENT WORKSHOP

The National Testing Network in Writing, the Florida State University, and the City University of New York, announce the Second Annual Conference on Writing Assessment on March 7, 8, and 9, 1984, at the Florida State Conference Center in Tallahassee, Florida. The conference is for educators, administrators, writers, and assessment personnel and will be devoted to critical issues in assessing writing in elementary, secondary, and postsecondary settings. Dr. Alan Purves of the University of Illinois will deliver the keynote address.

Discussion topics will include interdisciplinary perspectives on writing assessment, the politics of testing, computer applications in writing assessment, the impact of testing on minorities, research on writing assessment, and the effects of testing on curriculum and teaching.

For information and registration materials, please write Susan Lampman, Center for Professional Development and Public Service, Florida State University. Tallahassee. Florida 32306.

Exercise Exchange

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